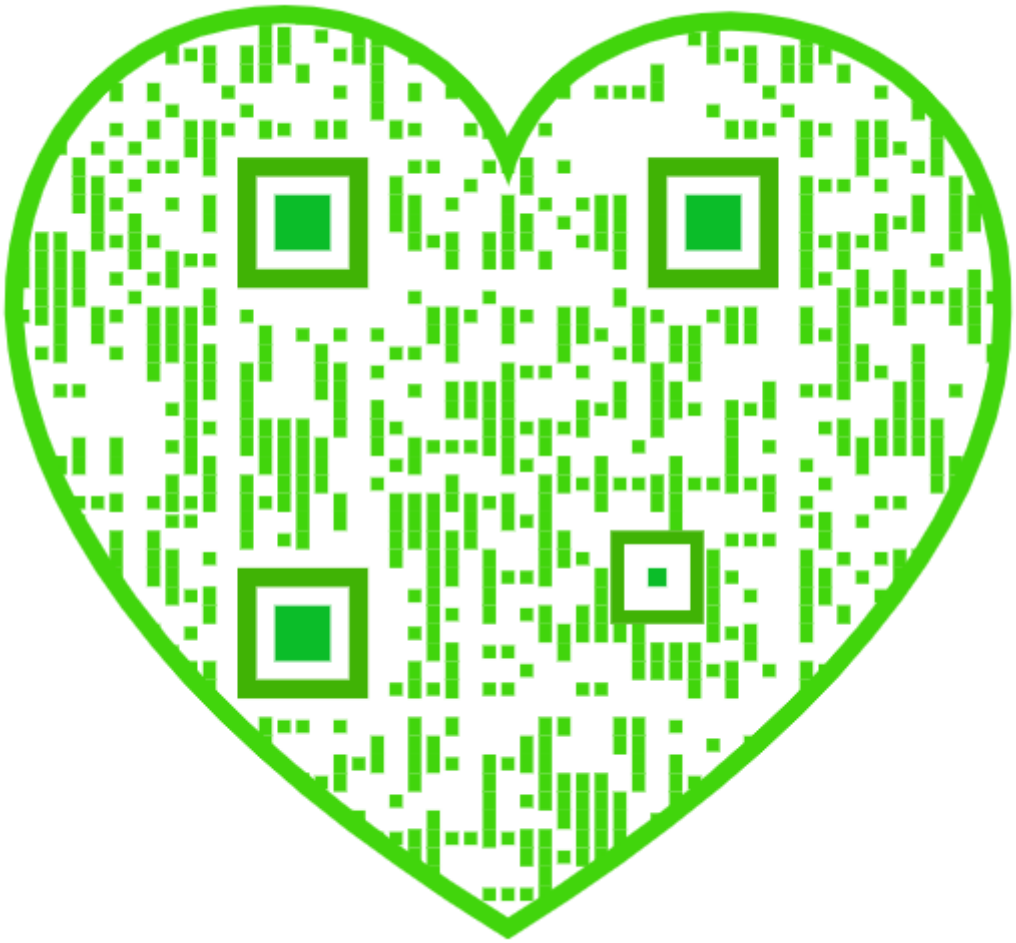

A

CONCISE HISTORY

OF THE

CISTERCIAN ORDER.

THE ABBEY OF MOUNT ST. BERNARD, NEAR LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE.

A

CONCISE HISTORY

OF THE

CISTERCIAN ORDER,

WITH THE LIVES OF

SS. ROBERT, ALBERIC, AND STEPHEN;

WITH ITS REVIVAL IN ENGLAND

AT ST. SUSAN'S, LULLWORTH,

AND

MOUNT ST. BERNARD, LEICESTERSHIRE.

A SKETCH OF THE

LIFE OF THOMAS WELD, ESQ.,

IS IMBODIED IN THE HISTORY OF ST. SUSAN'S, LULLWORTH.

BY A CISTERCIAN MONK.

Permissu Superiorum.

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AMBROSE LISLE PHILLIPPS, ESQ.,

OF GRACE DIEU MANOR,

AND

JOHN, EARL OF SHREWSBURY,

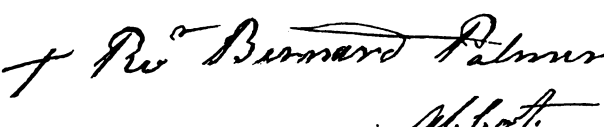
THE FOUNDERS AND PATRONS

OF THE ABBEY OF MOUNT ST. BERNARD,

LEICESTERSHIRE,

BY

THEIR MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,



TO THE READER.

There is accessible to the public little information—at least as it exists at present—concerning the ancient Institute of Citeaux, which in the Ages of Faith found so much favour in our own Island. Hence many kind and zealous friends have expressed to us, more than once, their desire to see this deficiency in the history of our present religious Institutions, filled up, by a work, which would be within the reach of the greater part of Catholic readers.

The fact, moreover, that, of all the ancient Orders, the Cistercian is the only one which has arisen from the grave, in which they were indiscriminately buried in this country at the period of the Reformation, in all the vigour of its primitive discipline, gives this request an additional interest.

We have given, therefore, the following historical compilation our approbation and authority. Much information concerning our holy Institute in the present century, has been derived from the testimony of those who are still its faithful and zealous members.

In the fervent hope that this history will meet the pious request of our friends, will edify our neighbours, and promote sentiments of profound humility, with an ardent love of Evangelical perfection, we recommend it to the favourable acceptance of the public.

✠ BROTHER BERNARD PALMER,

ABBOT.

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Introduction.

One of the many consolations with which it hath pleased the Almighty to favour the Catholics of England, in these days of brighter prospects and happier anticipations, is the sympathy so generally and so candidly expressed by the more enlightened of our Protestant countrymen, in our lament over the ruins of the magnificent monasteries which, previously to the destructive era of the Reformation, adorned this island. If, at that fatal period, the abuse, the ribaldry, the gross calumny and exaggeration of those bold, bad men, who reviled and cast dirt upon the spotless spouse of Christ, fell, like a volcanic eruption, on monks and monastic institutions,—it must surely be highly gratifying, at the present day, to behold their descendants in religious opinion excavating the lava, and disinterring the dead, to bestow upon them more honourable obsequies, and to wipe off a portion, at least, of the slander which has been heaped upon their ashes; clearing away, too, the rubbish from the sacred and dilapidated enclosure, and pointing, at one time with admiration, to the isolated window-arch, which displays, high above surrounding objects, the delicate proportions of its fairy-like tracery, peculiarly rich and pleasing by moon-light; and, at another, to the green and retired spot, on which the mighty fragments of all that is grand and sublime in architecture lie scattered,—varied and beautified, as that spot generally is, by hill, and dale, and pleasant woodlands, and murmuring rivulets, and all the various

charms requisite for scenery, where contemplation and piety love to dwell. [See Appendix L.]

Mr. Maitland, Librarian to His Grace the late Archbishop of Canterbury, in his Preface to the "Dark Ages," pp. iv and v, says: "It is quite impossible to touch the subject of Monasticism, without rubbing off some of the dirt which has been heaped upon it. It is impossible to get even a superficial knowledge of the mediæval history of Europe, without seeing how greatly the world of that period was indebted to the Monastic Orders; and feeling that, whether they were good or bad in other matters, monasteries were beyond all price in those days of misrule and turbulence, as places where (it may be imperfectly, yet better than elsewhere) God was worshipped—as a quiet and religious refuge for helpless infancy and old age, a shelter of respectful sympathy for the orphan maiden and the desolate widow—as central points whence agriculture was to spread over bleak hills, and barren downs, and marshy plains, and deal its bread to millions perishing with hunger, and its pestilential train—as repositories of the learning which then was, and well-springs for the learning which was to be—as nurseries of art and science, giving the stimulus, the means, and the reward to invention, and aggregating around them every head that could devise, and every hand that could execute—as the nucleus of the city which in after days of pride should crown its palaces and bulwarks with the towering cross of its cathedral.

"This, I think, no man can deny. I believe it is true, and I love to think of it. I hope that I see the good hand of God in it, and the visible trace of His mercy that is over all His works. But if it is only a dream, however grateful, I shall be glad to be awakened from it; not, indeed, by the yelling of illiterate agitators, but by a quiet and sober proof, that I have misunderstood the matter. In the mean time, let me thankfully believe that thousands

of the persons at whom Robertson, and Jortin, and other such very miserable second-hand writers, have sneered were men of enlarged minds, purified affections, and holy lives—that they were justly reverenced by men—and above all, favourably accepted by God, and distinguished by the highest honour which He vouchsafes to those whom He has called into existence, that of being channels of His love and mercy to their fellow-creatures." [See Appendix A.]

This favourable view of Monastic Institutions in England, previous to the Reformation, has, indeed, more ancient patrons—men, eminent in their day for profound learning and honourable principles. Amongst these, Sir William Dugdale is not the least. After his candid statement both of the motives which prompted, and the means which were employed in the destruction of religious houses, we scarcely can be surprised at the shame which mantles the cheek of later writers,—when they record, the ruthless barbarity of their forefathers.

> "Who sees these dismal heaps, but will demand,
> 'What barbarous invader sacked the land!'
> But when he hears no Goth, no Turk, did bring
> This desolation, but a Christian King;
> When nothing but the name of zeal appears
> 'Twixt our best actions, and the worst of theirs,
> What does he think our sacrilege would spare,
> Since these the effects of our devotion are."

In his History of Warwickshire, under the word Polesworth—pp. 800 and 801, edit. 1656—Sir Willliam Dugdale says: "Nevertheless, it was not the strict and regular lives of these devout ladies (the nuns of Polesworth); nor anything that might be said in behalf of the monasteries, that could prevent their ruin then approaching, so great an aim had the king to make himself thereby glorious, and many others no less hoped to be enriched in a considerable manner. But that such a change should

not overwhelm those that might be active therein; in regard the people everywhere had no small esteem of these houses, for their devout daily exercises in prayer, alms-deeds, hospitality, and the like; whereby not only the souls of their deceased ancestors had much benefit, and pilgrims constant advantage, there wanted not the most subtle contrivances to effect this stupendous work, that (I think) any age hath beheld; whereof it will not be impertinent, I presume, to take a short view."

"I look upon this business, as not originally designed by the King; but by some principal ambitious men of that age, who projected to themselves all worldly advantages imaginable through that deluge of wealth, which was like to flow amongst them by this hideous storm.

"First, therefore, having insinuated to the King matter of profit and honor; scilicet,—profit by so vast an enlargement of his revenue; and honor in being able to maintain mighty armies to recover his rights in France; as also to strengthen himself against the Pope, whose supremacy he had abolished, &c."

[Lord Herbert, in addition to these, assigns another motive. Henry [Life by L. Herbert, year 1535.] "thought monasteries did furnish more able men to contest with him in this point—the supremacy—than any part else; he advised, therefore, how to proceed with them," that is, how to destroy them.]

"Next, that it might be the more plausibly carried on, care was taken so to represent the lives of the monks, nuns, &c., to the world, as that the less regret might be made at their ruin. To which purpose, Thomas Cromwell being constituted general visitor, employed sundry persons, who acted their parts therein accordingly; viz., Richard Layton, Thomas Leigh, and William Petre, Doctors of Law; Dr. John London, Dean of Wallingford, and others; to whom he gave instructions in 86 articles; by which they were to enquire into the government and

behaviour of the religious of both sexes: which commissioners, the better to manage the design, gave encouragement to the monks, not only to accuse their governors, but to inform against each other; compelling them also to produce the charters and evidences of their lands, as also their plate and money, and to give an inventory thereof.

"And having by these visitors thus searched into their lives; which by a Black-book, containing a world of enormities, were represented in no small measure scandalous; to the end that the people might be better satisfied with their proceedings, it was thought convenient to suggest, that the lesser houses, for want of good government, were chiefly guilty of those crimes, that were laid to their charge; and so they did, as appears by the preamble to that act for their dissolution, made in 27, H. 8., which Parliament, consisting for the most part of such members as were packed for the purpose, through private interest; as is evident by divers original letters of that time. Many of the nobility for the like respects also favouring the design, assented to the suppression of all such houses as had been certified of less value than £250 per annum and giving them, with their lands and revenues, to the King.

"But how well the tenor thereof was pursued we shall soon see; these specious pretences being made use of for no other purpose than opening this gap, to make way for the total ruin of the greater houses, wherein it is, by the said Act acknowledged that religion was so well observed. For no sooner were the monks, &c. turned out, and the houses demolished—(that being it which was first thought requisite, lest some accidental change might conduce to their restitution)—but care was taken to prefer such persons to the superiority in government, upon any vacancy of those greater houses, as might be instrumental to their surrender, by persuading with the convent to that purpose; whose activeness was such, that within the space of

two years, several convents were wrought upon, and commissioners sent down to take them at their hands to the King's use.

"The truth is, that there was no omission of any endeavour that can well be imagined to accomplish these surrenders. For so subtlely did the commissioners act their parts, as that after earnest solicitation with the Abbots, and finding them backwards, they first attempted them with promises of good pensions during life; whereby they found some forward enough to promote the work,—as the Abbot of Hales, in Glouc. was,—p. 802.

"Neither were the courtiers inactive in driving on this work,—as may be seen by the Lord Chancellor Audley's employing a special agent to treat with the Abbot of Athelney, and to offer him 100 marks per annum pension, in case he would surrender; which the Abbot refused, insisting on a greater sum; and the personal endeavours that he used with the Abbot of St. Osithes, in Essex..... Nay, I find this great man the Lord Chancellor, hunting eagerly after the Abbey of Walden, in Essex.—out of the ruins of which that magnificent fabric, called by the name of Audley-end was built.

"Amongst the particular arguments which were used by those that were averse to surrender, I find, that the Abbot of Feversham alleged the antiquity of that monastery's foundation; scil. King Stephen, whose body, with the bodies of the Queen and Prince lay there interred, and for whom were used continual suffrages and commendations by prayers, yet would not avail: for resolved they were to effect what they had begun, by one means or other; insomuch as they procured the Bishop of London to come to the nuns of Sion, with their Confessor, to solicit them thereto; who, after many persuasions, took it upon their consciences, that they ought to submit unto the king's pleasure therein by God's law. But what could not be effected by such arguments, and fair promises,

which were not wanting nor unfulfilled, as appears by the large pensions that some active monks and canons had, in comparison of others, even to a fifth or sixth-fold proportion more than ordinary, was by terror and strait dealing brought to pass; for under pretence of suffering dilapidation in the buildings, or negligent administration of their offices; as also breaking the king's injunctions, they deprived some Abbots, and then put others that were more pliant in their rooms.

"From others they took their convent seals, to the end they might not, by making leases, nor by the sale of their jewels raise money, either for supply of their present wants, or payment of their debts, and so be necessitated to surrender. Nay to some, as in particular to the Canons of Leicester, the commissioners threatened, that they would charge them with adultery, &c., unless they would submit. And Dr. London told the Nuns of Godstow, that because he found them obstinate, he would dissolve the house, by virtue of the King's commission, in spite of their teeth. And yet all was so managed, as that the King was solicited to accept of them, not being willing to have it thought they were by terror removed thereto; and special notice was taken of them as did give out that their surrenders were by compulsion.

"Which courses, after so many, through underhand corruption, had led the way, brought in others apace, as appears by their dates, which I have observed from the very instruments themselves; insomuch as the rest stood amazed, not knowing which way to turn them. Some, therefore, thought fit to try, whether they might save their houses from this dismal fate so near at hand. The Abbot of Peterborough offering 2,500 marks to the king and 300 to the visitor General for his favour therein Others with great constancy refused to be thus accessory in violating the donations of their pious founders; but these, as they were not many, so did they taste of no little

severity. For, touching the Abbot of Fountaines, in Yorkshire, I find, that being charged by the commissioners for taking into his private hands some jewels belonging to that monastery, which they called theft and sacrilege, they pronounced him perjured, and so deposing him, extorted a private resignation. And it appears that the monks of Charterhouse, in the suburbs of London, were committed to Newgate; where, with hard and barbarous usage, five of them died, and five more lay at the point of death, as the commissioners signified; but withal alleged, that the suppression of that house being of so strict a rule, would occasion great scandal to their doings, forasmuch as it stood in the face of the world, infinite concourse coming from all parts to that populous city, and therefore desired it might be altered to some other use. And lastly, that under the like pretence of robbing the Church, the Abbot of Glastonbury, with two of his monks, being condemned to death, was drawn from Wells upon a hurdle, then hanged upon the hill called Tor, near Glastonbury, his head set upon the Abbey gate, and his quarters disposed of to Wells, Bath, Ilchester, and Bridgewater. Nor did the Abbots of Colchester and Reading speed much better, —and for further terror to the rest, some priors and other ecclesiastical persons, who had spoken against the King's Supremacy, (a thing then somewhat uncouth, being so newly set up) were condemned as traitors and executed.

"And now that all this was effected; to the end it might not be thought that these things were done by a high hand, the King having protested that he would suppress none without consent of Parliament, a Parliament being called, April 28, 1539, to confirm these surrenders so made, as hath been said, there wanted not plausible insinuations to both houses, for drawing on their consent with all smoothness thereto; the nobility being promised large shares in the spoil, either by free gifts from the King, easy purchases, or most advantageous exchanges; and

many of the active gentry, advancements to honour, with increase of their estates: all which we see happened to them accordingly; and the better to satisfy the vulgar, was it represented to them, that by this deluge of wealth, the kingdom should be strengthened with an army of 40,000 men, and that for the future, they should never be charged with subsidies, fifteens, loans, or commons aids. By which means the Parliament ratifying the before specified surrenders, the work became completed; for the more firm settling whereof, [p, 803,] a sudden course was taken to pull down and destroy the buildings, as had been before upon that dissolution of the smaller houses, whereof I touched; next to disperse a great portion of the lands amongst the nobility and gentry, as had been projected, which was accordingly done; the visitor-General having told the King, that the more had interest in them, the more they would be irrevocable.

"And as for the fruit, which the people reaped, after all their hopes built upon those specious pretences, which I have instanced, it was very little: for plain it is, that subsidies from the clergy, and fiteens of all laymen's goods were soon after exacted. Nor is it a little observable, that whilst the monasteries stood, there was no Act for the relief of the poor, so amply did those houses give succour to them that were in want; whereas in the next age, viz. 39 Eliz. no less than eleven bills were brought into the house of Commons, for that purpose."

After this valuable testimony of Sir Wm. Dugdale, let us review the motives which induced the suppression of the Monasteries.

I. Their dissolution was intended to fill the empty coffers of a profligate King. Mr. Thomas Southouse in his "Survey of the Monast. of Faversham," in Kent, printed 1671, says: "I might enlarge myself now by making inquiry into the causes that moved Henry VIII. to the extirpation of so many religious foundations.....

but I shall sum up the causes briefly in the words of an elegant and witty poet.

> "In the common fate
> The neighbouring Abbey fell. May no such storm
> Fall in our age, where ruin must reform!
> Tell me, my Muse, what monstrous dire offence,
> What crime could any Christian King incense
> To such a rage? Was't luxury or lust?
> Was he so temperate, so chaste, so just?
> Were these their crimes? They were his own much more.
> But they, alas! were rich and he was poor;
> And having spent the treasure of his crown
> Condemns their luxury to feed his own.
> And yet this act, to varnish o'er the shame
> Of sacrilege, must bear devotion's name."—(p. 127, &c.)

II. To satiate the hungry cormorants,—his unprincipled nobility—Henry himself said to Sir Thomas Seymour: "There are a sort of you whom I have liberally given of suppressed monasteries, which, as you have lightly gotten, so you have unthriftily spent—some at dice, other some in gay apparel, and other ways worse, I fear; and now all is gone, you would fain have me make another chevisance (gratuity) of the bishops' lands, to satisfy your greedy appetite." The King himself lost £300 at a sitting with Edward Seymour, elder brother of this man. [Miss Strickland's Lives of the Queens of England, Vol v. Life of Kat. Parr, p. 50.]

"The King," says Mr. Collier, "was very bountiful not to say profuse, in parting with these Abbey lands, of which Fuller gives several instances. To mention one or two: He tells us, he made a grant of a religious house to a gentlewoman, for presenting him with a dish of puddings which happened to oblige his palate. This historian adds, he played away many thousands a year belonging to monasteries. And particularly, that Jesus' bells hanging in a steeple not far from St. Paul's, London, very remarkable both for their size and music, were lost at one throw to

Sir Miles Partridge. And those monasteries which passed from the Crown by sale or exchange were granted upon very unequal and slender considerations. [Ecclesiastical Hist. Vol. ii. part 2, Book iii. p. 166.]

III. To destroy the men who were "able to contest" the King's new fangled supremacy.

See Appendix B.

The means by which the monasteries were suppressed are not behind the motives in their opposition to justice and total disregard of all laws human and divine.

I. The appointment of a commission composed of unscrupulous and dishonest persons. Cromwell, the Visitor-General, became so wicked, that Henry, whom he had served with such shameful servility and profound baseness, caused him, after the mockery of a trial, to be decapitated. Of Dr. London, Fuller says: "He was no great saint, for afterwards he was publicly convicted of perjury, and adjudged to ride with his face to the horse-tail at Windsor and Ockingham. [p. 314.] Strype subjoins that he was condemned to do public penance at Oxford for incontinency with two women, the mother and daughter. [i. 377.] "Bedyl, from a letter of one of his colleagues [in Fuller p. 315.] appears to have been an artful but profligate man. If we believe the northern insurgents, Layton and Lee were not much better." [Dr. Lingard's Hist. of Engl. vol. iv. qrto. p. 261,]

See Appendix C.

II. The necessity of proceeding with great caution, made the commissioners suggest the expediency of attacking the smaller monasteries the first, upon the plea of bad government. "Now it is somewhat strange," says Dr. Collier, "discipline should be most insignificant where there are fewest to be governed, and infect the rest. And that no regulation could be of force enough to keep a few people within compass. Had it not been for this Preamble (to the Act for the suppression of the lesser monasteries,)

one would have thought the greater monasteries would have been with more difficulty managed. But these, the Act tells us, were regular enough and answered the ends of their institution." [Ecclesiast. Hist. vol. ii, part ii. book ii, p. 114.]

III. Notwithstanding the solemn asseveration of the Act above-mentioned, that in the great monasteries of this realm, thanks be to God, "religion is right well kept and observed;" yet two years later, another Act maligns them and charges them with gross immorality, and dooms them to destruction. It mantles the cheek with shame to think that it was an English Parliament which published these monstrous falsehoods. But "it may be questioned," says Tytler, "whether any outrage upon the law, or any infringement, however gross, upon the property and liberty of the subject, was not likely under this reign Henry VIII, to have a sanction in parliament and on the bench." [Life of Henry VIII, 2 edit. Edinb. 1837.] Under the plea of examining the morality of religious houses, Henry practised an infamous piece of hypocrisy and deception, so well described by the Poet we have already quoted. For they were condemned one and all to destruction without any regard to vice or virtue—without any distinction of those which enforced the discipline of their holy institute from those which had yielded to relaxation. Lord Herbert informs us, that "some societies behaved so well, as, their life being not only exempt from notorious faults, but their spare time bestowed in writing books, painting, carving, graving, and the like exercises, their visitors became intercessors for them. But it was thought dangerous to use distinctions." [Life of Henry, year 1535.] "The nuns of Polesworth, in Warwickshire," we have been already told by Sir W. Dugdale, "were found after strict scrutiny, virtuous and religious women, and of good conversation." Mr. Hallam mentions that the visitors "strongly interceded for the nunery of Godstow, as an irreproachably

managed and an excellent place of education, and, no doubt, some other foundations should have been preserved for the same reason. Latimer who could not have a prejudice on that side, begged earnestly that the priory of Malvern might be spared, for the maintenance of preaching and hospitality." [Hallam's Constitut. Hist. of Engl. vol 1, ch. ii. p. 102.]

Bishop Burnet affirms that the Prior of this Monastery "is recommended for being an old worthy man, a good housekeeper, and one that daily fed many poor people." [Hist. of the Reform. vol. 1, p. 237, fol. edit.]

Mr. Southouse says: "I shall now briefly conclude my survey of this Abbey (Faversham), with this remarkable memoir. That neither the Abbot of this house, nor any of his brethren were detected or branded with any crooked or irregular deviation from the paths of honour and virtue; but with all sincerity and faithfulness they are found to have led their lives in this their sequestration and retirement from the world, innocent as doves and harmless as sheep; the revenue and rents of their convent and cloister they spent in hospitality and good housekeeping, welcoming the stranger, and relieving the poor and needy." [Survey of Faversham, p. 142.] Clement Spelman, Puisne Baron of the Exchequer in the reign of Charles II., in the Preface which he attached to his Father's work: "Churches not to be violated," by Sir Henry Spelman, says of the Abbots of Glastonbury, Reading and Colchester, R. Whiting, Hugh Farringdon and John Beck, "that their innocency had made them regardless of threats, and their piety abhor rewards to betray their churches." [p. 20, Oxf. edit. 1841.] And we have seen that they were hanged for their fidelity to their duty. In page 71 of the same work, he terms monks, at the period when covetous sacrilege destroyed all our Monasteries, all our Religious Houses, the suppressors of vice, by their strict, regular, and exemplary life; (though some, nay many

among them, sons of Ely, made the "offerings of the Lord to stink before the people.") Dr. Lingard very justly observes: "There is one fact which appears to me decisive on the subject. Of all the monastic bodies perhaps the monks of Christ Church have suffered the most in reputation: they are charged with habitually indulging the most immoral and shameful propensities. Yet, when Archbishop Cranmer named the clergy for the service of his cathedral, he selected from these very men no fewer than eight prebendaries, ten minor canons, nine scholars and two choristers. From his long residence in Canterbury he could not be ignorant of their previous conduct, from respect for his own character, he would not surround himself with men addicted to the most disgraceful vices." [Hist. of England, vol. iv. qrto. edit. p. 261.]

"And as it was known," says Mr. Hume, "that the King's intention in this visitation was to find pretence for abolishing monasteries, we may naturally conclude, that the reports of the commissioners are very little to be relied on. Friars were encouraged to bring informations against their brethren; the slightest evidence was credited; and even the calumnies spread abroad by the friends of the Reformation, were regarded as grounds of truth." [Hist. of Engl. vol. iv. p. 442.]

With this body of evidence before us—not from Catholic but from Protestant sources—we are perfectly justified in asserting, that the suppression of Religious Houses in England upon pretence of their relaxation, was a solemn farce, a grievous mockery and contempt of truth.

See Appendix C.

IV. The violation of the rights of property. "If resistance to the chief magistrate," observes Mr. Collier, "had been justifiable in any case, those who appeared in arms at the dissolution of the monasteries, had a strong colour for their undertaking. For were not the old landmarks set aside, and the constitution new modelled? For

do not the liberties and immunities of the Church stand in the front of Magna Charta? Was not the King's coronation oath lamentably strained when he signed the Dissolution Act? For had he not sworn to guard the property of his subjects, to protect the Religious, and maintain them in their legal establishment? "The abbeys, without question, had all the security the civil magistrate could give them. No estate could be better guarded by the laws. Magna Charta, as I observed, was made particularly in favour of these foundations, and confirmed at the beginning of every parliament, for many succeeding reigns." [Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. part. ii. book ii. p. 138, &c.]

Mr. Hume tells us that "men much questioned whether priors and monks, who were only trustees or tenants for life, could by any deed, however voluntary," (for the profligate king had unblushingly published the calumny, that the abbots and priors had, without restraint, surrendered their houses to him,) "transfer to the king the entire property of their estates." [Hist. of Eng. vol. iv. p. 489.] Baron Spelman, in the work which we have already quoted, p. 28, &c., reasons in the following manner upon the subject. "God tells us, Levit. xxvii. v. 28, that things devoted are most holy to the Lord, and not redeemable." The reason given by divines is, because it was given with a curse; and if that be the reason, do thou then peruse the charters of foundations of monasteries and abbeys, and tell me if they be not devoted and most holy to the Lord. And then, if not redeemable, much less I think to be taken from the Church, without any satisfaction or consent of the priests.

"The charters were usually in these words, Concessi Deo et Ecclesiæ, &c., offero Deo et confirmavi Deo et Ecclesiæ; and these grants have, in our common law, been abjudged good and valid; our much reverenced Magna Charta, so oft confirmed by parliament, beginning with, Concessimus Deo quod Ecclesia Anglicana libera sit,

&c. [Coke, Institutes, part ii. Magna Charta, fol 2, quod datum Ecclesiæ datum Deo.] Sir Edward Coke, in his comment upon it, saith, "What is granted for God, is in law deemed to be granted to God; what is granted for His honour, what for maintenance of His service of His religion, is granted to and for God, and that anciently these grants were good in law.....The founders of religious houses, in the conclusion of their deed, following the example of Darius, [Ezra vi. v. 12,] imprecate a most heavy curse on them that violate or withdraw their gifts. Venientibus contra hæc et destruentibus ea occurrat Deus in gladio iræ, et furoris, et vindictæ, et maledictionis æternæ." [p. 31.] "There were within this realm of England one hundred and eighteen monasteries founded by the kings of England." [Survey of Faversham in Kent, p. 11.] One of the Popes, at king Edgar's desire, took Glastonbury into the bosom of the Roman Church, and the protection of the holy Apostles, and denounced a perpetual curse upon any one who should usurp, diminish, or injure its possessions. The good old historian, William of Malmsbury, when he recorded this, observed, that the denunciation had always, till his time, been manifestly fulfilled, seeing no person had ever thus trespassed against it, without coming to disgrace by the judgment of God. By pious Protestants, as well as Papists, the abbey lands were believed to carry with them the curse which their first donors imprecated upon all who should divert them from the first purpose whereunto they were first consecrated; and in no instance was this opinion more accredited, than in that of the protector Somerset, (who received a grant of this abbey from Edward VI., and who died upon the scaffold.)" [Southey's Book of the Church, vol. ii. p. 123.]

Thus, "there wanted not," as Sir Wm. Dugdale hath informed us, "the most subtle contrivances to effect this stupendous work—the destruction of religious houses—

that any age hath beheld." These "subtle contrivances" were bribery, threats of imputing to the innocent religious crimes which it is not permitted to Christian lips to mention without a just cause,—the deposition of some, and the murder of other abbots who were firm in their conscientious duty, the substitution of courtlings in their stead, and the violation of the laws of property. "Who can call to mind," exclaims Dr. Southey, "without grief and indignation, how many magnificent edifices were overthrown in this undistinguished havoc? Malmsbury, Battle, Waltham, Malvern, Lantony, Rivaux, Fountains, Whalley, Kirkstall, and so many others, the noblest works of architecture, and the most venerable monuments of antiquity, each the blessing of the surrounding country, and, collectively, the glory of the land! Glastonbury, which was the most venerable of all, even less for its undoubted age, than for the circumstances connected with its history, and which in beauty and sublimity of structure was equalled by few, surpassed by none, was converted by Somerset, after it had been stripped and dilapidated, into a manufactory, where refugee weavers, chiefly French and Walloons were to set up their trade!" [Book of the Church, vol. ii p. 123.]

"The number of monasteries first and last suppressed in England and Wales were (as Camden accounts them,) 645." [Lord Herbert's Life of Hen. VIII., year 1539.] *

* The following statement is taken from Clement Spelman, Puisne, Baron of the Exchequer, in his preface to his father's work, "Churches not to be violated," p. 73. Mr. Cambden [Cambden Britt. f. 163. p. ccxxx. ed. 1722.] in his Britannia, saith, that in the time of Henry VIII., after the dissolution of the lesser houses, there were remaining 645 monasteries, (monuments of our ancestors' piety,) built to the honour of God, and propagation of the Christian faith, learning, and the relief of the poor; all came to Henry VIII. Yet all this excess of wealth, added to that mass of £5,300,000 left him in ready money by his father, could not preserve him from want, wherewith he is so sore pressed, that about

Of these monasteries one hundred and one were of the Cistercian Order; [Mr. Nasmith in his edit. of Tanner's Notitia,] many of them pre-eminent for the beauty and retirement of their situation, and the splendour of their architecture.*

"The bees being flown, let us consider a little the strange havoc which was made by a pack of drones within their hives." [Survey of Faversham, p. 140.] "The persons into whose hands the abbey lands had passed, used their new property as ill as they had acquired it. The tenants were compelled to surrender their writings, by which they held estates for two or three lives, at an easy rent, payable chiefly in produce; the rents were trebled and quadrupled, and the fines raised even in more enormous proportion.....sometimes even twenty-fold. Nothing of the considerate superintendence which the monks had exercised,...nothing of their liberal hospitality, was experienced from these step lords, as Latimer, in his honest indignation, denominated them. The same spirit which converted Glastonbury into a woollen manufactory, depopulated whole domains for the purpose of converting them into sheep farms, the tenants being turned out to beg, or rob, or starve. To such an extent was this inhuman spirit carried, that a manifest decrease of population appeared in the muster books, which in those days answered the purpose of a census.

"Such oppressions drove men to despair, and produced insurrections, which, by those who looked far off for causes close at hand, were imputed to the sun in Cancer, and the Midsummer moon." [Dr. Southey, Book of the Church, vol. ii. p. 127.]

the thirth-sixth year of his reign, of all the kings of England he alone coins not only base tin and copper, but leather money.

* Byland, Kirkstall, Fountains, (Yorkshire) Furness, Whalley, (Lancashire) Bildewas, (Salop) Tintern, (Monmouth) Nettely, Hants) &c., &c.

See Appendix D.

"While the Religious Houses stood, they, employing their revenues according to the donor's direction, opened wide their hospitable gates to all comers, and without the charges of a reckoning, welcomed all travellers, until the statute of 1 Edward I. restrained and limited them; and casting their bread upon the waters, they relieved the neighbouring poor, without the care of the two next justices of peace, or the curse of a penal law,—[Baron Spelman] a law 'which now eats like a canker into the core of our national prosperity.' [Blunt, Sketch of the Reformat., p. 143.] 'Then we had no new laws (the offspring of new vices) to erect houses of correction for lewd and vagrant persons, [vid. 43. Eliz. c. 2. 3.] to provide stock, to bind poor children prentices, or to make weekly levies to maintain the weak, lame, indigent, and impotent people, to our new charge of annual subsidy at least.' [Baron Spelman in his Preface, &c. p. 71.] For 'these institutions came in place of the alms-houses, the infirmaries,—the retreats for the destitute and the unfortunate, where the aged servant, who had survived the powers of maintaining himself, the decayed or crippled artisan, the unbefriended orphan, the outcast foundling, received relief and sympathy; where charity was bestowed without grudging, and accepted without humiliation.' [Tytler, Life of Henry VIII., p. 408.]

See Appendix E.

Another grievous evil which followed upon the suppression of the monasteries in England, is thus lamented by John Bale the centurist: Covetousness was at that time so busy about private commodity, that public wealth was not any where regarded. A number of them which purchased those superstitious mansions, (he thus designates the religious houses,) reserved of those library books, (we will not mention the purpose,).....some to scour their candlesticks, and some to rub their boots, and some they sent to the grocers and soap-sellers, and some they sent over

the sea to bookbinders, not in small numbers, but at times, whole ships full. Yea, the universities of this realm are not all clear in this detestable fact. But cursed is the belly that seeketh to be fed with such ungodly gains, and so deeply shameth his natural country. I know a merchant that bought the contents of two noble libraries for forty shillings price; a shame it is to be spoken. This stuff hath he occupied instead of grey paper, by the space of more than ten years, and yet he hath store enough for as many years to come. A prodigious example is this, and to be abhorred of all men which love their nation as they should do; yea, what may bring our nation to more shame and rebuke, than to have it noised abroad that we are despisers of learning? I judge this to be true, and utter it with heaviness, that neither the Britains under the Romans and Saxons, nor yet the English people, under the Danes and Normans, had ever such damage of their learned monuments, as we have seen in our time. Our posterity may well curse this wicked fact of our age, this unreasonable spoil of England's most noble antiquities.' [Bale's declaration upon Leland's Journal, An. 1549.] The Editor of 'Letters written by eminent persons, in the 17th and 18th centuries,' says: 'The splendid and magnificent abbey of Malmsbury, which possessed some of the finest manuscripts in the kingdom, was ransacked, and its treasures either sold or burnt, to serve the commonest purposes of life. An antiquary, who travelled through that town many years after the dissolution, relates that he saw broken windows patched up with remnants of the most valuable manuscripts on vellum, and that the bakers had not consumed the stores they had accumulated in heating their ovens!" [Vol. i. p. 278. Chambers' Cyclopœdia of English Literat., Art. John Stow.]

These are some of the public mischiefs which followed the dissolution of religious houses, and which are so justly lamented by liberal minded Protestants, who have con-

sidered it their duty to "rub off some of the dirt which has been heaped upon Monasticism." "We hail, as harbingers of better times, various events, in themselves perhaps unimportant, yet telling clearly that the utility of the monastic system is becoming more generally acknowledged; among these may be mentioned the late discussion at the Union at Cambridge. The subject proposed, was to the effect that, 'the dissolution of Monasteries, by Henry VIII., has been highly injurious to this country, and the circumstances of the time imperatively demand the restoration of similar institutions.' After a debate of three evenings, 88 declared in favour of the motion; and it was thus carried by a majority of 28 votes." [Dublin Review, No. XXXI., March, 1844, Art., Suppression of Monast. Note at the end.]

See Note F., Appendix.

This is certainly exhilarating to the Catholic mind, and makes it pleasant to pause a moment at each point of utility, for which our ancient monasteries were distinguished; since "the circumstances of the time imperatively demand the restoration of similar institutions." We will not tie ourselves to any particular arrangement, but record these services as they occur to the mind, principally, however, in the language of eminent Protestant writers. Most of them have been already mentioned, but in a scattered and cursory manner; a repetition, therefore, in which they will stand out in bolder relief, and be displayed in a more effective view, will not, it is hoped, be either tedious or displeasing to the pious reader.

I. Religious Houses did not confine their deeds of benevolence to the relief of mendicants; they were not the mere ancient prototypes of the present workhouse. No; they were the dispensaries of charity in all its various branches,—pouring out upon needy and suffering humanity its sweet waters through many channels and pleasant rivulets. They were in place of alms-houses, where helpless old age—where the hoary headed servant who had sur-

vived the powers of earning his own maintenance, might repose in security. They were infirmaries for the sick, hospitals for the decayed or crippled artisan, or the outcast foundling. They were shelters of respectful sympathy for the orphan maiden, and the desolate widow. In a word, they were the mansions of religion in which the hungry were fed, the naked clothed, and the dead buried; in which charity was bestowed without grudging, and accepted without humiliation."

II. They were inns for the way-faring, who heard from afar the sound of the vesper bell, at once inviting to repose and devotion, and who might sing his matins with the morning star, and go on his way rejoicing. [Blunt's Sketches of the Reformation, p. 141.]

III. "The virtues of the monks assumed a still higher character, when they stood forward as protectors of the oppressed—Monasteries possessed the right of sanctuary, in which innocence was shielded, and the hot pursuit of revenge excluded. We can hardly regret, says Mr. Hallam, 'in the desolating influence that prevailed,' (in feudal times) 'that there should have been some green spots in the wilderness, where the feeble and the persecuted might find refuge. How much must this right have enhanced the veneration for religious institutions! How gladly must the victims of internal warfare have turned their eyes from the baronial castle, the dread and scourge of the neighbourhood, to those venerable walls, within which not even the clamour of arms could be heard to disturb the chant of holy men, and the sacred service of the altar! The protection of sanctuary was never withheld.'" [Middle Ages, Vol. ii. c. ix. Part i. p. 448, &c.]

IV. Monasteries "were central points whence agriculture was to be spread over bleak hills, and barren downs, and marshy plains.....Without at present entering into a subject which is extremely interesting, and for the illustration, of which materials are very abundant,' writes

Mr. Maitland, "I may just observe, that the extraordinary benefit which monastic institutions conferred on society by colonizing waste places—places chosen because they were waste and solitary, and such as could be reclaimed only by the incessant labour of those who were willing to work hard and live hard—lands often given because they were not worth keeping—lands which, for a long while, left their cultivator's half starved, and dependent on the charity of those who admired what we must too often call, a fanatical zeal; even the extraordinary benefit, I say, which they conferred on mankind, by thus clearing and cultivating, was small in comparison with the advantages derived from them by society, after they had become large proprietors, landlords with more benevolence, and farmers with more intelligence and capital, than any others." [Dark Ages, No. XXIII. p. 393-4.—See also Henry Hallam's Middle Ages, Vol. ii. p. 422.]

V. Monasteries were the depositories of the learning which then existed, and well-springs of future literature; "the preservers of learning, both divine and human, by their learned works and laborious manuscripts." [Baron Spelman] In these secure repositories for books, all our manuscripts have been preserved, says Mr. Hallam, "and could hardly have descended to us by any other channel; at least, there were intervals when I do not conceive any royal or private libraries existed." [Middle Ages, vol. ii. p. 439.] The monks, writes Mr. Collier, "bred their novices to letters; and to this purpose, every great monastery had a peculiar college in each of the universities. And even to the time of their dissolution, they maintained great numbers of children at school, for the service of the Church. Hence it appears, the monks deserved a fairer character than is sometimes given them." [Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. part 2. book i., p. 19.] "Strip off the feathers borrowed by many of our present writers from the good old monks," says Washington Irving, I think, in his 'Sketch

Book,' "and they would become sorry birds indeed; nay, some would vanish altogether, both body and plumage. [Art of Book Making, Sketch Book.]

VI. Religious Houses were "nurseries of art and science, giving the stimulus, the means, and the reward to invention, and aggregating around them every head that could devise, and every hand that could execute." [Mr. Maitland.] No labour or expense was spared in adorning the interior of churches. Most of the artists employed upon the Cathedral of Pisa, in the 11th century, were Greeks. Desiderius, Abbot of Monte Cassino, in order to adorn the new church he had built there, brought over Greek painters and artists, from Constantinople. In their materials, the men of those ages, showed how they valued durability. The gates of Cypress wood, which Adrian III. erected in St. Peter's, were in good preservation five hundred years afterwards. The roof of St. Paul's Basilica was cedar of Libanus, the oldest church in the world.

The monks soon learnt to surpass their masters in the decoration of churches, as may be seen by the cathedrals still standing in this country, several of which were minsters or abbatial churches. "Many of the abbey churches," says Bishop Tanner, "were equal, if not superior, to our present cathedrals; and they must have been as much an ornament to the country, and employed as many workmen in building and keeping them in repair, as noblemen's and gentlemen's seats do now." Who, then, can visit the ruins of those venerable temples of God, without a sentiment of profound grief in reflecting upon the treasures of art which have been swept away by Vandalic barbarism? "Nothing is more evident," says Northcote, [Life of Titian, vol. i. p. 397,] "than that the Church of Rome alone has been the creator and sole nourisher of the art in its grandest aspect, from which it has received all its dignity. It has now been clearly proved for some ages past, that there is a moral impossi-

bility in this noble art, painting, in its loftiest aims, ever arriving at any degree of respectability in a Protestant country, where it cannot rise beyond the mechanic exercise of a portrait, or the humble baubles for a cabinet; all its struggles are but vain; as well might we expect to see corn grow on the barren rock."

But after reading that St. Eloy used to have some pious book always open before him, whilst his hands were employed in some delicate workmanship, that others never commenced a painting without purifying their souls by sacramental confession,—can we wonder that the works of such ages should be unlike our own? Aurelius Lomi, of Pisa, wrote upon his picture of the Adoration of the Magi these pious lines: "What shall I return to Thee, O good Jesus, for all that Thou has done to me? Not gold, not incense, nor myrrh, but my heart, and, from the treasury of my heart, this work I give unto Thee." The great Bolognese painter, Augustin Caracchi, used to make a retreat in the convent of the Capuchins, where he died. In fact the early Christian painters were generally monks and men of interior life. Raphael had for his master in the divine art a friar, friar Bartholomew, the Dominican, who is regarded as one of the greatest painters of the Florentine school. Bramante made his first studies in drawing under the same master. Art has felt deeply the loss of this profound religious sentiment, and has been reduced to a mere display of skilful execution, often indicating the most offensive affectation, and proving rather a caricature than a just expression of the soul's desire.*

VII. Monasteries were hallowed enclosures, happy gardens,—not as the Eden of old, exposed to the wily and

* See Mr. Digby's "Mores Catholici," vol. iii., from which several passages are taken; and also Mrs. Jameson's "Sacred and Legendary Art," and "Legends of the Monastic Orders, as represented in the Fine Arts," for much that is interesting. See Appendix G.

infernal serpent's ingress,—but carefully watched and guarded by many sentinels, into which the child of innocency was transplanted from the infectious air of this corrupted world, ere "wickedness had altered his understanding, or deceit beguiled his soul."

> "Virtue, for ever frail as fair, below,
> Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,
> Nor touches on the world without a stain.
> The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,
> Immaculate, the manners of the morn.
> Something we thought is blotted,—we resolv'd,
> Is shaken;—we renounc'd, returns again.
> Present example gets within our guard,
> And acts with double force, by few repell'd.
> Ambition fires ambition; love of gain
> Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast;
> Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours breathe,
> And inhumanity is caught from man—
> From smiling man! A slight, a single glance,
> And shot at random, often has brought home
> A sudden fever to the throbbing heart
> Of envy, rancour, or impure desire.
> We see, we hear, with peril; safety dwells
> Remote from multitude."
>
> *Young's Night Thoughts, Night V.*

See Appendix H.

VIII. Religious houses, the abodes of meek-eyed peace, "were founded by the piety of our ancestors, with the charitable design to give a retreat to such persons as had a wish to detach themselves from the affairs of the world, and dedicate their lives to the service of God, in a state of quiet and devotion." [Higgins' Short View of English Hist. p. 189.] The late Poet Laureate, Wordsworth, has given a description of this object of monastic institutions, in language at once so sublime and beautiful, that we cannot resist the temptation to insert it.

> "What other yearning was the master tie
> Of the monastic brotherhood, upon Rock—
> Aerial, or in green secluded vale,

One after one, collected from afar,
An undissolving Fellowship? What but this,
The universal instinct of repose,
The longing for confirmed tranquillity,
Inward and outward; humble, yet sublime:—
The life where hope and memory are as one;
Earth quiet and unchanged; the human soul
Consistent in self-rule; and heaven revealed
To meditation in that quietness!"

Despondency, in The Excursion.

IX. Monasteries were sacred asylums of penance, to which many, whose lamp of virtue had gone out, came to rekindle it, and to spend its later and brighter flame in the employment of their Maker, in effacing, by its eminent lustre, the darker shades of past life, the frailties and the ignorances of their youth. Religious houses to these heart-stricken penitents, were as the calm and beautiful stilly basons or fiords, surrounded by tranquil groves and pastoral meadows, to the Norwegian pilot escaping from a heavy storm, or as the green and dewy spot gushing with fountains to the exhausted and thirsty traveller in the midst of the desert.

X. Monasteries were prominent and well-discerned beacons, throwing afar upon the adjacent country the light of good example. "Monks were sworn to chastity, poverty, and obedience to their superiors, three excellent virtues, which that they might the more faithfully observe and easily keep, they renounced the debauched world and all its alluring vanities, and buried themselves alive in a gloomy repository, conversing with iron bars and flinty walls, before the effeminate and corrupted secular people,

"Fuit hæc sapientia quondam
Publica privatis secernere, sacra prophanis."

In which their solitude and apartment, they seemed like stars of the first magnitude, by the rays of whose devotion the ignorant vulgar found oftentimes the way to

heaven. To be short, such was their severity to themselves, their kindness to their friends, and lastly, which exceeds all, their fervency in their religion to their God, that all the world admired them; and monks were in those olden times of so sacred esteem, that from the throne to the gentleman, there was scarcely any family so irreligious but one or other of their issue was devoted to the cloisters." [Mr. Thomas Southouse, Survey of Faversham, p. 29.]

XL Monasteries were houses of prayer.

> "Prayer ardent opens heav'n, lets down a stream
> Of glory on the consecrated hour
> Of man, in audience with the Deity.
> Who worships the great God, that instant joins
> The first in heav'n, and sets his foot on hell."
>
> *Night Thoughts.*

"The continual prayer of the just man availeth much. Elias was a man possible, like unto us, and with prayer he prayed that it might not rain upon the earth, and it rained not for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." [James, v. 16, &c.] "A man of ordinary piety," says the illustrious Jeremy Taylor, "is like Gideon's fleece, wet in its own locks, but could not water a poor man's garden. But so does a thirsty land drink all the dew of heaven that wets its face, and a great shower makes no torrent, nor digs so much as a little furrow, that the drills of water might pass into rivers, or refresh their neighbour's weariness; but when the earth is full, and hath no strange consumptive needs, then, the next time God blesses it with a gracious shower, it divides it into portions, and sends it abroad in free and equal communications, that all who stand round may feel the shower. So is a good man's prayer; his own cup is full; it is crowned with health and overflows with blessings, and all

that drink of his cup, and eat at his table, are refreshed with his joys, and divide with him his holy portions." [Sermon on Prayer.]

St. Athanasius relates that Constantine and his sons recommended themselves to the prayers of St. Anthony in his hermitage, and placed great confidence in his intercession. The Empress Eudocia visited St. Euthymius in his solitude in Palestine, and implored his favour with heaven on behalf of herself and family. Both Theodosius's, the elder and younger, had recourse to the prayers of the Eastern monks and solitaries of the desert, and never thought themselves safe without their supplication.

"When the fleet of French paladins, under Philip Aug. bound for Palestine, encountered a dreadful storm in the straits of Messina, and all hope of safety had vanished, the king, after midnight, consoled his men by saying: 'Cease your fears: already the brethren of Clairvaux are risen to matins. The saints, who do not forget us, are reciting their holy service in honour of Christ.' As he spoke, the tumult of the atmosphere subsided, the moon and the stars again appeared, and the sea grew calm." [Mores Catholici, Book, x. p. 190.]

Monasteries were houses of prayer, the gates of which were never closed, from midnight hour till after set of sun. For is there an hour, asks the poet, in all nature, when the heart should be weary of prayer—when man should have no incense to offer before God's altar—no tear to confide to the bosom of his mercy? Hence the devout inhabitants of religious houses sought by their untiring assiduity to repair the coldness and contempt thrown upon this sacred duty by a vain and giddy world. They broke off the midnight slumber, and anticipated the loud clarion of the wakeful bird, so early with his matins, —and the swift chariot of the rising sun,—and seven times in the day, in imitation of Sion's royal bard, they poured forth their souls in praises to their Maker.

"Even thus of old
Our Ancestors, within the still domain
Of vast Cathedral or Conventual Church,
Their vigils kept; where tapers day and night
On the dim altar burned continually,
In token that the House was evermore
Watching to God, Religious Men were they;
Nor would their Reason, tutored to aspire
Above this transitory world, allow
That there should pass a moment of the year
When in their land the Almighty's service ceased."
Wordsworth.

If, however, we must grant, that some of these services to Christian society, so dutifully discharged by monastic institutions, are, in England, no longer within the sphere of their charitable labours; yet many of them still demand the sedulous attention and fostering care of secluded and religious life for their higher and more desirable accomplishment. Are there, at the present day, in this island, no bleak hills, no barren downs and marshy plains which require the patient industry and combined energy of the monastic brotherhood to break up their stubborn soil and make it pliant, to remove the harsh features from these sterile regions, and shed upon them the rosy smiles of youthful nature and well-clad cultivation? Let the bold cliffs and rugged projections of granite rock, the wide waste of heath and morass of Charnewood Forest, bear testimony to this great and pleasant change of aspect. Amidst the ephemeral literature of the present hour, does no one sigh for the stillness of the monastic lectorium, where studies of higher order and more solemn import may be pursued by stable and well-directed minds, studies which would lead to worthy purpose and exalted aim, —the tutelage and formation of man for heaven? Would not the inspirations of genius be more vividly depicted on the canvas, or rise from the marble block in greater majesty of form, in more elegant symmetry, and all but breathing the human face divine, in the quietness

of the cloister's sanctuary, secure from shock of accident, and released from fear, than in the murky atmosphere, and distracting bustle, and corrupting influence of our populous cities, in which its pinions are fettered down and its soarings contracted within a very narrow and contemptible span, and "where it cannot rise beyond the mechanic exercise of a portrait or the humble baubles for a cabinet?" Would not the sacred sanctuary of monastic institutions partially meet the wishes of the Christian orator, who, in an eloquent address to young persons on leaving college, made this fervent apostrophe, in which every good Christian most cordially joins: "Oh! that the Almighty, in his creative Omnipotence, would call into existence some other world, far removed from the corrupted influence of this,—some happier soil, whose air should not be infected with the breath of sin, to which he would in his mercy transport the child of innocence, ere yet the sinner had made the first attempt to seduce his heart!" But when youth has had the misfortune to let go the sheet anchor of religion, and, drifted into the deep sea of the world, suffered the shipwreck of virtue; there follows sometimes in later years an abatement of the storm, and then the mind filled with consternation at the waste and havoc sin has made around it, suggests to the unhappy soul thoughts of retracing the devious path, and of regaining the sweet peace, the inward blessing of a good conscience, and of holding fast again by the stay of religion: heaven also propitiously smiling upon these holy chidings of remorse, confirms the incipient desires of repentance, and drops from a gentle cloud the dews of compunction.

Oh, what would not this charged and sorrowing heart then give for the silence and sequestration of the cloister, in which might be poured out, without fear of intrusion, the tears already teeming from the fountain of grace opened by the mercy of God for its purification? Or if

eyes must gaze upon the humbled and prostrate penitent, let them be the meek and compassionate eyes of a holy brotherhood united to him in tenderest sympathy and beaming with the radiancy of approbation and affection.

———Are not monasteries retreats, into which the Catholic gentleman or tradesman may, from time to time, conveniently retire, to breathe awhile from the cares and dissipations of the world, and renew his energies and prepare his plans for successful battling with temptation, and the attainment of the crowning grace of perseverance in a virtuous life?

———But it is often stated that cloistered monasteries are not the needful institutions of the present day. The active communities are the right hand of the Church in her onward course in England. The warrior in these eventful times, must be girded with armour and nerved for the battle field, and not reposing upon his arms in the enjoyments of the peaceful valley. These observations, however true within their proper limits, must not be interpreted in too broad a sense; otherwise they will be found in direct opposition to the spirit of the Church and the instructions of her Divine Founder. The solicitude of Martha about many things must not be encouraged to the exclusion of contemplation and prayer, the "better part" chosen by Mary. Frequently, moreover, there is a total misconception of the case. To suppose that religious confined within the cloister singing the divine praises and in the employment of fervent prayer, are not armed and fighting the battles of the Lord and his Church is a grievous mistake. The weapons of a good and zealous recluse are both powerful and triumphant, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and his ears unto their prayers." [Ps. xxxiii. 16.] "He will do the will of them that fear Him, and will hear their prayers." [Ps. cxliv. 19.] Whilst Moses lifted up his hands in prayer upon the hill of Raphidim, the Israelites fought and overcame Amalec; but

when he let down his hands a little Amalec overcame. And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands on both sides, for they were heavy, until Joshua put Amalec and his people to flight." [Ex. xvii.] And would it not be well in these days, when battles have to be fought with spiritual weapons against the enemies of Christ's church, to have devout hands lifted up in prayer upon the mountain tops, away from the din and strife of the engagement, imploring the Lord of Hosts to fight for his people and crown them with victory?

This mere suggestion will be sufficient to awaken in the minds of those conversant with the writings of the Holy Fathers and the Lives of the Saints, the reflection now generally received as an undoubted maxim, that prayer is oftentimes more efficacious in the conversion of souls than controversy.

The restoration in England, therefore, of one of the most illustrious branches of the great Benedictine family, in all itsprimitive discipline and fervour of purpose, must be highly gratifying to every Catholic, anxious to see his country regain the long forfeited appellation of the Island of Saints. It cannot be denied, that the Cistercian Order has beenone of the most favoured in the privileges of the Church. Its antiquity, more than seven-hundred years old; the austere and edifying lives which the holy founders of this order practised in wild and uncultivated districts in imitation of the fathers of the desert; the great services it has rendered to the church; the number of illustrious persons who deemed it a great happiness to be received into its community; the many eminent prelates who have been elected from its cloisters, have obtained for it extraordinary marks of esteem and distinction from a succession of eminent and learned Pontiffs who have sat in the Chair of Peter and ruled the Church of God.

"Non sine quadam animi voluptate aggredior, atque utinam perficere liceat, Annales sæculi duodecimi, in quo nova Cisterciensis

congregatio cum Cluniacensi uberrimam historiæ nostræ materiam suppeditat. Etsi enim accuratam et absolutam de rebus Cisterciensibus narrationem instituere nequaquam sit animus, utpote quæ peculiarem tractationem et singularem historiam postulet, habeatque jam nobile hoc argumentum nobilem in primis historicum (Marniquez Annales Cisterc.); nobis tamen minime licet prætermittere illustriora saltem Cisterciensis familiæ acta et eventa, quæ et ad posterorum exemplum utillissima, et ad totius Benedictini Ordinis decus ac splendorem præclarissima esse constat . . . Nullus, si non fallor, a tempore sancti Benedicti fortunatior fuit annus quàm 1113, quo Bernardus cum triginta sociis, quos Christo lucratus erat, veluti totidem triumphati sæculi manubias Cistercium ingressus est. [Hactenus pusillus grex Cisterciensis cum Stephano abbate omnem ferè spem desponderat, jamque eis tædio esse cœperat paucitas sua, admirantibus cunctis venerantibusque eorum vitæ sanctitatem, sed austeritatem refugientibus. At Bernardi ejusque sociorum exemplo omnis ætatis, regionis, et dignitatis homines, videntes non ultra humanas vires esse quod ipsis impossibile visum erat, illuc magno agmine undique concurrere tantumque brevi excrevit familia Cisterciensis, ut ex ea nata sit amplissima congregatio, Benedictini Ordinis portio noblissima, immo amplissimus Ordo." &c. Annales Ordinis Sti. Benedicti, by Mabillon, Tom v. pages 403 & 547.

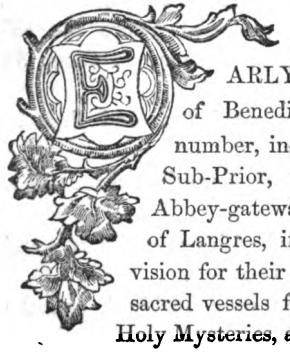
A CONCISE HISTORY

OF

THE CISTERCIAN ORDER.

CHAPTER I.

SS. ROBERT, ALBERIC, STEPHEN,—WITH OTHER RELIGIOUS, LEAVE MOLESME. THEIR REASONS. THEIR PERMISSION FROM THE LEGATE OF THE HOLY SEE. THEIR JOURNEY TO CITEAUX. DESCRIPTION OF CITEAUX. THE NEW MONASTERY. THE DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH. ST. ROBERT THE FIRST ABBOT, ETC.



EARLY in the year 1098, a little band of Benedictine monks, twenty-one in number, including the Abbot, Prior, and Sub-Prior, were seen issuing from the Abbey-gateway of Molesme, in the diocese of Langres, in France, with no other provision for their travels, than the vestments and sacred vessels for the celebration of the most Holy Mysteries, and a large breviary for the due performance of the divine office. The parting of brethren, united by the common bond of a holy rule, is always painful; yet sometimes necessary for the preservation of peace and charity. When different elements, in which there can be no amalgamation, are brought into action the result will be division and separation. Tepidity and

fervour will not meet and coalesce. Fervour pushes forward in the way of Evangelical perfection; tepidity shrinks, retrogrades, and finally treads the downward path of relaxation. When these two elements, therefore, are in operation amongst the same brotherhood, there will necessarily follow chiding, remonstrance and earnest entreaty from the side of fervour; and resistance, disobedience, or silent contempt from the camp of lukewarmness. "What fellowship is there between light and darkness?" Though often blended into that which painters term the middle or neutral tint; yet there is always antagonism and struggle for separation. Many of the Religious of Molesme, swayed by the affluent circumstances of their monastery, allowed or tolerated customs at variance with the strict Rule of their holy Founder, St. Benedict; and in defiance of the wishes of their pious Abbot and the remonstrances of his fervent disciple, St. Stephen.

The following were some of the relaxations complained of:—Novices were sometimes professed before the expiration of their year's novitiate, contrary to Chap. 58 of the Rule.

Some of the Religious made use of skins and Furs in their clothing, contrary to Chap. 55.

Fugitive brothers were received more than three times, contrary to Chap. 29.

The regular fast was dispensed with on certain days and particular festivals, contrary to Chap. 41.

The hours of manual labour were abridged, and the labour was not performed according to the prescription of Chap. 48.

Strangers were not welcomed with the salutation ordained in Chap. 53.

The Abbots of Cluny, of which Molesme was a filiation, neglected to keep an account of the implements and effects of the monastery in accordance with Chap. 32.

Those who said the divine office in private, did not say it upon their knees, as appointed Chap. 50.

The junior brethren in passing before their seniors, did not ask their benediction, according to Chap. 63.

The porter was not an ancient brother, and did not salute visitors at the gate of the Monastery, in the manner prescribed, Chap. 66.

After having promised stability in one house, some of them made no scruple of promising it again in another, by a second profession, a violation of Chap. 58.

Abbots were in the practice of receiving indifferently all Religious who presented themselves, without the consent of their proper Superiors, and without letters of recommendation, contrary to Chap. 61.

And they engaged in many employments contrary to the spirit and profession of a recluse life.

There were other minor objections which required a rigorous interpretation to make them violations of the Rule. "It is proper," says the Author of a work entitled "Sentimens Religieux." "that a Religious should propose to himself the greatest regularity, the utmost exactitude, and the most scrupulous observation of the minor practices of his Rule. He ought to consider, that his state demands not merely the ordinary Christian virtues; but likewise others proper to the state to which he has pledged himself. Every Order has its own peculiar spirit; whilst all of them should be animated by the general spirit of charity. Jesus Christ, the Sovereign Architect of an immortal Temple which he has erected to the glory of his Father, has not hewn all the stones according to the same pattern, nor squared them to the same size. For since he has diversified the proportions and ornaments of this magnificent edifice, so has he given to those whom he has destined to be the living stones diverse shapes and dimensions, calculated to produce the variety of form and decoration of his design, and to fit

and fall into the very place he had appointed and prepared for them.....Every order, therefore, has its peculiar spirit to which all its members should conform themselves. Every Order has its rules, to which all its members ought to be obedient. Every Order has in view an end, at which all its members ought to aim. And the greater the sanctity of any Order, the less can its duties be dispensed with."

As the tranquillity of temporal government depends upon the due observance of the laws, so the perfection of a religious life consists in a timorous fidelity to the regulations and prescriptions of superiors. Hence, to those who were aspiring with their whole souls to perfection, the above innovations were a source of uneasiness and anxiety, for they would evidently open a door to greater relaxations. Thus, the bond of holy fellowship, which ties hearts together in mutual sympathy, and in the same ardent desires, and in the same virtuous pursuits, was dissolved. The sad degeneracy of many monasteries brought on by the use of frequent dispensations, seemed to warn the more fervent members of Molesme in an imperative voice, that there was no remedy but absolute separation. They well knew, that it is far easier to establish a new foundation in fervour and strict discipline, than to reform one already departed from its primitive rule.

St. Stephen, and those whom he had inspired with the same disposition, stated their difficulties, and their resolutions founded upon these difficulties, to their holy Abbot, St. Robert. To their great joy and consolation, he cordially entered into their views, and consented to be one of the little band, who were anxious to seek perfection away from the dangerous relaxations of Molesme. Although Abbot St. Robert was still under the guidance and authority of the Mother House of Cluny. Prudence, therefore, and necessary respect checked the hand which was prepared for the work of complete reformation. But

to the new enterprise he brought a master mind, which directed it through the proper channel of obedience, and brought it to a successful and happy termination. With a deputation of five of his brethren—Stephen, Alberic, Odo, John, Lætaldus, and Peter, he waited upon Hugh, Archbishop of Lyons, and Legate of the Holy See in France. He briefly stated their errand, and requested the permission necessary for the orderly accomplishment of their purpose. The reasons he gave for wishing to leave his present charge, the life of strict discipline he was anxious to lead with his companions, in a situation more favourable than Molesme, pleased the pious prelate, and won his approbation. He sent them, on their return to Molesme, the document necessary to authorise th eir separation from that monastery. "Be it known," he writes, "to all who rejoice in the advancement of our holy Mother, the Church, that you, with certain brethren of the monastery of Moslesme, have declared in our presence at Lyons, that you desired to adhere to the rule of St. Benedict, which hitherto, in the aforesaid monastery, you had observed in a lukewarm and negligent manner—henceforth more strictly and more satisfactorily; which desire, through many causes, you cannot effect in your present situation; therefore, consulting the salvation of both parties in the said monastery, we have thought it better that you should retire to some place, God in his bounty may point out to you, therein to serve Him with greater health and quietness of soul. And we confirm this our advice to you to persevere in your holy design, by our apostolical authority and seal."

On receiving this letter, St. Robert returned to the brethren who wished to remain as they were, the vow of obedience to himself; and gave them, at the same time, the liberty of electing his successor. Thus fortified by authority, the band of fervent brethren which we have just seen leaving the Abbey-gate, proceeded on their march

in bold and solemn procession, deaf to the entreaty of those from whom they parted. Through wild and rugged paths they journeyed on, chanting the divine praises, until they arrived at the forest of Citeaux, in the diocese of Châlons, in the province of Burgundy. Here they beheld a vast solitude, chiefly inhabited by wild beasts, that found shelter in the thickets of underwood and brambles which luxuriated in the parts left vacant by forest trees. Through it ran a small stream, which took its rise from a fountain, about five leagues from Dijon, called sans-fonds, because it was so deep that no one had ever found the bottom. The stream from this fountain sometimes overflowing its banks, left in the hollows of the adjacent lands, stagnant pools, which fostered the growth of bulrushes and various aquatic plants. From these features of its locality it derived its name of Citeaux.

The beautiful and picturesque situation of many ancient abbeys arrests the traveller's attention and fills him with admiration. The quiet spot embosomed amidst green hills, or the darker shades of the aged forest, and enriched by a more luxuriant vegetation than the surrounding country, with the "trotting brook," or the larger rivulet sweetly murmuring as it glides past the ruined walls, mantled by the friendly and ever verdant ivy, might once have presented to the holy brotherhood, who selected it for their dwelling place, the dreary and sterile aspect of Citeaux.

In this forbidding situation, St. Robert and his companions beheld, either by some special indication from Heaven, or by previous choice and arrangement, the spot most eligible for their new foundation, and the austere life which their hearts were glowing to practise. "On the borders of the woods of Citeaux were several scattered cottages, wherein dwelt the peasants that cultivated the estate of the Viscount Beaune, to whom the property belonged; there was also a rude and small church, for the

use of this rustic population. The Lord of Beaune gave the pious monks leave to take possession of this most unpromising tenement; and they forthwith began to clear away the briers and the sedge, and to cut down the trees, so as to clear an open space for their habitation." They then hastily put together the trunks of the trees which they had felled, and constructed in this very simple and primitive manner their new monastery. The rudeness of their dwelling gained for them a powerful friend.

Odo, Duke of Burgundy, hearing from the Archbishop of Lyons,* that a number of holy men were building a monastery in his territory, made many inquiries concerning them. When he found their habitation, consisting of a few cells composed of unshapen timber, so miserable that he feared they would not survive the hardships of this dreary and unproductive situation, he sent workmen to assist them in completing their monastery, furnished them a long time with necessary provisions, and gave them much additional land, and also cattle to stock it. When the edifice was ready for reception, they appointed the 21st of March, which, in the year 1098, fell on Palm Sunday, for the solemn inauguration of the new Abbey. St. Robert was elected Abbot; and he received his pastoral staff from William, Bishop of Châlons, who thus regularly erected the monastery into an abbey, under the name of Novum Monasterium, or New Minster. The brethren, then, one by one, renewed their vow of obedience according to the following formula :—"The profession and stability which I made in thy presence, at the Monastery of Molesme, the same I affirm before God and his saints, I will keep in this place called New Minster, in obedience to thee and to thy

* In the Menologium &c., by Henriquez, two letters are given in notes to St. Robert's Life; the first from St. Robert to Odo, Duke of Burgundy, imploring the assistance of this prince; the second from Odo, promising with much respect every favour within his power. Odo, therefore, could not be ignorant of St. Robert's departure from Molesme, with the intention of founding a new monastery.

successors lawfully appointed." The church was completed the following year, and consecrated to God under the patronage of the ever Blessed Virgin Mary, to whom all the churches of the Order have been since dedicated.

It is worthy of notice, that the holy Founder of the Cistercian Order refused to accept the church from Viscount Beaune, as an appanage to the estate; nor would he consent to take charge of it, until it was entirely made over to the religious, in what is now termed freehold property. No new monastery of this Order was permitted to be established, until the Bishop of the Diocese in which it was to be founded, gave his consent for it to be placed under the jurisdiction of the Mother House of Citeaux.* Hence Cistercian Monasteries from the commencement were exempt from ordinary episcopal jurisdiction. This privilege was many times confirmed by the solemn sanction of the Holy See. [See Note I.]

St. Robert appointed Alberic, prior, and Stephen, sub-prior. They had no particular constitutions or regulations, for they had pledged themselves to the literal fulfilment of that Great Patriarch's Rule, St. Benedict, who had so ably and so discreetly drawn out the principal duties of a religious life. With this law before them, they practised in the wilderness of Citeaux the poverty, the purity of mind and body, and the entire obedience of the eastern monks, in the early ages of the Church. They were linked together in the bond of holy fellowship, for the exalted purpose of attaining to Christian perfection; and they pursued it with fervent emulation, breathing ardently after the happiness of Heaven. Their days glided away in peace, as a rippling wave upon the calm ocean of life, which wafted them gently into the bosom of eternal peace.

Thus was established the illustrious Order of Citeaux,

* See the "Privilèges de l' Ordre de Citeaux à Paris, MDCCXIII.

in the year A.D. 1098, "the little fountain," as Clement IV. terms it, "which with the sunbeams sporting upon its silvery surface, swelled into a mighty river, irrigated other religious Orders with the pure streams of good example, and spread joy and fertility over the whole Church of God. By its lowly origin, by its profound poverty, by its profession of humility, and by the number of its professors, it may be justly compared to a fountain—a fountain flowing through pleasant gardens, and refreshing many even distant lands, by its limpid waters;—a fountain so sweet and delicious by the variety of its excellent qualities, its perfect freedom from all worldly impurities and its never-failing piety and sanctity, that it deserved to increase and spread out its channel into a great stream such as went out of the place of pleasure to water Paradise, and many and great have been the blessings which it has conferred on Christendom,"—Bull 1265. It will now be proper to say a few words upon each of the master spirits who brought their talents, their energy, and their approved virtue to the construction of this eminent Religious Order.

NOTE.—The reader is reminded not to expect an elaborate History of the Cistercian Institute, but merely a slight and rapid sketch, which appeared necessary as an introduction to its Revival in England. Hence, few authorities are referred to. The substance of the first chapter may be found in the "Privilèges de L'Ordre de Cisteaux, à Paris, 1713." "Menologium, Regula, Constitutiones et Privilegia Ordinis Cistertiensis," "Essai de l' Histoire de L'Ordre de Citeaux, par Dom. Pierre Le Nain," "The Cistercian Saints of England, Stephen Abbot," and Alban Butler.

CHAPTER II.

ST. ROBERT. HIS BIRTH. HIS ENTRANCE INTO A MONASTERY. ELECTED SUPERIOR. HIS REMOVAL TO ANOTHER HOUSE. HIS DEPARTURE THROUGH THE MISCONDUCT OF THE RELIGIOUS. HIS APPOINTMENT TO COLAN. REMOVAL TO MOLESME. HIS ABANDONMENT OF THIS UNRULY COMMUNITY. HIS RETURN. HIS DEPARTURE FOR CITEAUX. HIS RECAL FROM CITEAUX TO MOLESME. HIS DEATH.

ST. ROBERT was born in the year A. D. 1017, in Champagne, in France. His parents, Theoderic and Ermegarde, no less noble than virtuous, trained his youth in the paths of learning and piety. His holy mother was prompted in a special manner to watch over his early years, and instil into his mind fervent sentiments of devotion, by a vision with which she was favoured previously to his birth, and which indicated that her son would be a devoted servant to the Virgin and spotless Mother of God.

Robert, anxious to correspond with the merciful designs of Divine Providence, whatever they might be, upon his future existence, kept himself secluded from the world and from secular business. When fifteen years of age, he entered the Benedictine Monastery of St. Peter-la-Celle, near Troyes, in which he took the habit, and presented himself a victim pleasing in the sight of God. He consecrated himself with all earnestness to a life of penance, stealing from the night the hours of repose, that he might prolong his favourite exercise of prayer. The flesh he brought under the controul of the spirit; and the spirit he made obedient to its Creator. In this course of spiritual warfare, he advanced from virtue to virtue;

ardently desiring that his whole life might be hidden with Jesus Christ in the desert. But God ordained that he should be an eminent light to guide others in the path of salvation. Though the youngest in the house, he was chosen Prior. He discharged this important office with much prudence, and fully answered the opinion which had been entertained of his wisdom.

But whilst he was thus instructing and edifying his brethren of St. Peter-la-Celle, the religious of St. Michael de Tonnerre were without a superior, and committing daily infractions of their Rule. Having heard of the shining virtues of St. Robert, they desired him for their Abbot; and by powerful means succeeded in the accomplishment of their wish. St. Robert consented with much difficulty; and not until he had received a promise of perfect docility and submission to his instructions.

When, however, he came to the correction of abuses, and the restoration of discipline, he found them incorrigible. They turned a deaf ear to his entreaties, and ungratefully refused to apply the remedies which the charitable physician prescribed for their maladies.

When spiritual sloth seizes upon men it takes away the use of their reason and their faculties in spiritual, exactly as the palsy does in temporal, matters. Their nerves are unstrung; they are under an absolute inability to work out their own salvation, and walk in the way of God's commandments. Their hands are neither lifted up to Heaven in prayer, nor stretched out to the needy in charity. Their feet cannot support or carry them forwards in the course of holy duties. Their tongue cleaves to the roof of their mouth, and they sink down at last poor, helpless, useless creatures, fit only to while away time in sleep and idleness.

St. Robert saw the enemy of salvation casting his unruly religious into this fatal lethargy, and he mourned over their relaxation and wilful blindness. With a sor-

rowful heart he believed that duty obliged him to leave them to their degeneracy, and return to La-Celle, where he would enjoy the favourite contemplation and repose of Mary—the better part which could not be taken from him.

Whilst thus quietly resting upon his oars, the monks of St. Aigulphus unanimously elected him prior. But certain anchorets, in the neighbouring desert of Colan, desirous of becoming Benedictine monks, had long fixed their eyes upon St. Robert for their superior; and though once disappointed in their attempt to obtain him, they now pushed their request more resolutely by appealing to the Holy See. The Pope, Alexander II., wrote and desidered the Abbot of La-Celle to surrender Robert to these earnest religious; and he was accordingly appointed their abbot.

St. Robert found in the monastery of Colan great virtue, and in his new religious excellent materials for the erection of the spiritual edifice of Christian perfection. St. Alberic was one of the anchorets who thus placed themselves under his guidance in a regular monastic community. The habitation of Colan being found too small, St. Robert, with a portion of the religious, withdrew to the Forest of Molesme, in the diocese of Langres, in Burgundy. Here these few religious built for themselves, around a small wooden oratory, a collection of huts from the boughs of the trees which they had cut down with their own hands. This rustic monastery was dedicated in honour of the Blessed Virgin, on Sunday, the 20th of December, A. D. 1075.

On every side of this knot of cabins more like an encampment than a settled dwelling, was an open space in the forest which the monks had cleared, and which had been given them by a neighbouring baron. The brethren had no means of subsistence, but the produce of this piece of ground, which they tilled with their own hands; and

they were as much dependent upon it as the poorest serf that gained his livelihood by the sweat of his brow; yet amongst this poor brotherhood were men of noble birth and high intellectual attainments. It was here St. Stephen found the retreat he was in search of; in this rude monastery, struggling with all the difficulties which beset an infant community, but carrying out to the letter the Rule of St. Benedict.

"The monastery at times suffered from actual want; from the loneliness of the spot and the fewness of visitors, they were quite forgotten by the world, and the alms of the faithful were turned into other channels. They continued, however, in cheerful faith, winning their livelihood out of the hard ground, and feeling sure that God would not desert them; and, indeed, they found that their faith was not misplaced. One day, as they were about to sit down to a scanty meal, after the hard labour of the day, the Bishop of Troyes arrived at the monastery with a considerable retinue. The poor monks felt ashamed that they could so miserably supply the needs of their illustrious visitor, but cheerfully divided with him their hard won meal. The bishop went away from the monastery, wondering at the fervent piety of its inmates. For a long time nothing came of this visit, and the monks had probably forgotten it. Meanwhile the resources of the community became daily more straitened, till at last there were hardly provisions enough to serve them for a few days. The brethren applied to St. Robert, and informed him of the state of the case. He bade them quietly trust in God, who would not leave his servants to perish in the solitude to which they had retired to serve Him. He ordered some of them to go to Troyes, which was much nearer to them than their own episcopal city of Langres, and bade them buy food, though he knew well that he had no money to give them. The exact conformity of their lives to the very letter of scripture, made them look upon it as a

solace and a counsel in the minutest points, in a way of which we have no conception; thus the words of Isaiah rose to St. Robert's mind, 'Ye who have no money, hasten, come, and buy.' [Isai. lv.] Encouraged by the faith of their abbot, the monks set out on their apparently hopeless journey. So long had the good brethren kept away from the world, that they forgot the singularity of their appearance. They were therefore surprised on entering the city, that their naked feet, coarse habits, and features, so worn with toil and watching, that the fervent spirit seemed to shine through the flesh, attracted general attention. The news flew hastily round, till it reached the Bishop's palace. He ordered them to be brought to his presence, and as soon as they entered recognized his hosts of Molesme. He received them with joy, took off their tattered habits, and sent them back with his blessing, and a waggon laden with clothes and bread for their poor brethren at home. We may fancy the joy of the community when they saw their messengers return, not empty-handed as they went, but laden with the blessings which God had given as it were with His own hand, to reward their faith. This seems to have been nearly the last of their struggles with poverty," for, says the monk who has written St. Robert's life, "and from that day forth there never was wanting to them a man to supply them with all that was necessary for food and clothing. And as they endured with the greatest constancy in God's service, many continually were added to their number; fugitives from the world, who leaving their earthly burdens, placed their necks under the yoke of the Lord." [8 Bollandists, April 29.]

"The community of Molesme seemed now to be in a fair way of becoming the head of a new and flourishing congregation of the Benedictine Order. It might have rivalled Cluny, for many abbots prayed Saint Robert to grant them some of his monks, by way of introducing

into their own monasteries the reform of Molesme. It would have become what Citeaux was afterwards, had not the folly of the monks frustrated the designs of God." [Cistercian Saints, &c.]

Riches opened a door for relaxation and degeneracy. St. Robert endeavoured to stem the tide of innovation that was rushing in upon his community; but such force did it soon obtain, that his resistance was unavailing. They who began their departure from their rule by despising the poverty of Christ, ended by disobeying their abbot. When poverty and obedience are no longer held in esteem, regularity of life is hopeless. St. Robert seeing that his presence irritated his refractory children, appointed Alberic superior, and withdrew to the hermitage of Aurun or Hauz in the neighbourhood of the monastery. In this peaceful harbour he renewed his strength by prayer and penance for the work which might still be before him.

The monks of Molesme soon found, that with St. Robert, they had lost the pilot who alone could steer the vessel through the dangers and difficulties of a narrow sea. But they knew not how to induce him to return; for he paid little attention to their urgent solicitations. A mandate, however, which they obtained from Rome, Robert could not reject, and he again placed himself at the head of the unruly brethren, who promised to be more tractable to his future injunctions. But we may easily suppose that he entered upon his charge with many unpropitious forebodings. He had already experienced the fickleness of the human heart, when once it has departed from the fervour of the religious state. Notwithstanding the unfavourable prospect, he put forth all his exertions in the restoration of discipline, and in requiring the strict observance of rule. All things seemed to be in a flourishing and satisfactory condition, and the monastery was again in apparent harmony.

But the Saint's anticipations were soon realized; and

his solemn departure, (which we have mentioned in the preceding chapter) with many of his brethren, for the new foundation of Citeaux, was the result. In the peaceful state there discribed, Citeaux remained a year under Robert's guidance; for he was not permitted to enjoy longer the fruit of his labours. The monks of Molesme were again in agitation. They required the authority of one whom they sincerely respected to restrain them within the bounds of propriety. Since Robert's departure they had sunk from bad to worse; they had become the contempt of every one; and few were the donations which flowed into their treasury. They took the bold measure, as their only prospect of success, of sending deputies to Rome, to complain of the widowed state of their church, and entreat for the pastor's return. They alleged in their appeal, that religious observance had suffered much in his absence; and that on his reunion with them depended the prosperity of their house, and the salvation of their souls.

Urban II. was holding at that time, soon after Easter, A. D. 1099, a council at Rome. Thither the deputies followed him, and presented to him their petition. The Pope strongly suspected their statement. He did not think it consistent with justice to oblige St. Robert to leave his new monastery, which he had governed so judiciously, to return to monks who were restless, disobedient, insensible, and ungrateful, and from whom he had been compelled to retire.

But the bishops uniting their suffrages with the supplications of the deputies, to escape their importunity and clamour, he referred the matter to his Legate in France, Hugh Archbishop of Lyons; and desired him to bring about, if he could conveniently, without disturbing the peaceful inhabitants of the wilderness of Citeaux, the return of Robert to Molesme.

The Legate summoned a provincial council, at which

both Robert and Geoffry his successor were present. When Geoffry willingly consented to renounce his authority, it was decided that Robert should be obedient to the wishes of the Holy See. Quietly acquiescing in this decision, St. Robert gave back his crosier into the hands of the Bishop of Châlons, absolved his religious from their promise of obedience to him, bade farewell to his beloved Citeaux, and retraced his steps to Molesme.

In St. Robert we behold a perfect pattern of obedience. There are three classes of actions in which we may practise this virtue. The first, contains those which are agreeable to our own will; the second such as are unpleasant, but in no way trespassing upon the conscience; the third, beside their opposition to the will, seem to intrude upon the domain of conscience, and cast a doubt upon the obligation of submission. There is no difficulty whatever in the first class of actions, the second demands both self-denial and the fear of God. But the third requires the sacrifice of holocaust, or the complete surrender of the heart to the will of a superior in all things which are not distinctly sinful. How justly might St. Robert have alleged against his return to Molesme scruples of conscience, and the danger in which he might place his soul by living among brethren who had not his fervour of spirit. But the Father of the faithful had spoken through his Legate, and St. Robert, renouncing his present peace and quietness, bowed his head in patient and humble submission.

It is easy, perhaps, to forgive and forget once. But to return to Molesme and embrace in holy friendship—to love as his spiritual children, those persons who had risen up several times in stern opposition to his authority, and even used threats against his person, demanded a fund of charity not often to be found in the human heart.

St. Robert was received, on his arrival at Molesme, with unbounded joy; and the nobility of the neighbourhood came to pay him their respects. God testified his pleasure

at his servant's ready obedience by many miracles, and crowned his efforts which had hitherto failed with success, by the happy termination of his government. One instance will suffice to show the vigour with which he ruled, in his later years, his former unruly children.

Two ecclesiastics one day met St. Robert, at the gate of the monastery, and asked him for charity. Moved by their appearance of poverty, he called the cellarian, and ordered him to provide them with some thing to eat. The cellarian replied that there was no bread in the house. "What, then, do you intend to give the brethren for their nourishment to-day," rejoined the Saint? "I do not know," continued the other. Now, at the hour of repast the bell sounded as usual. St. Robert immediately demanded whence the cellarian had obtained bread for the refectory? The latter answered that he had preserved a few loaves, lest the brethren should be entirely destitute of food. Then the servant of God, inflamed with holy indignation against so much disobedience and mistrust of the divine bounty, gathered all the bread from the refectory into a basket, and threw it into the stream which flowed by the monastery. God gave his approval of his holy zeal, by prompting certain pious females of the neighbourhood to carry bread to the Abbey; so that when St. Robert went to the gate, he found three vehicles laden with provisions. Then calling together his brethren, he severely reproved the cellarian for his disobedience and want of confidence in God's mercy; he concluded by exhorting them all to repose their wants and solicitudes in the bosom of Him who clothes in so much splendour the lilies of the field, and provides so amply for the birds of the air.

St. Robert was still united to his beloved Citeaux by a tender and affectionate correspondence: "Since I no longer cleave to you," he writes, to his once beloved children, "my tongue cleaveth to my mouth.. Since my eyes no

longer behold you, the light of my eyes is not with me. Whilst my heart was being torn from you—from you it never can be—it became as melted wax within my bowels. Although I have been forced from you, yet I have never been separated from a holy union with you in Jesus Christ, the bonds of which, are as firmly tied together as if no distant lands intervened between us. Molesme possesses by the laws of obedience my bodily presence; but Citeaux enshrines the dearest affections of my soul."

St. Robert, after bearing his infirmities and last sickness with admirable patience, expired amidst the tears and afflictions of his spiritual children, on the 17th of April, A. D. 1100, at the age of 93.* His death was rendered illustrious by a bright light, which illuminated the heavens, and by many miracles. He was canonized by Honorius III., A. D., 1222.

The principle feature in St. Robert's life, was the faithful practice of this golden rule of duty: entire submission to the will of God. No matter what plans might be drawn out,—what prospects of future quietness might be entertained, when God spoke every inclination withdrew its claim to attention; every feeling of the soul was still; every thing near and dear was set aside, that the voice of the Deity might be heard and obeyed in respectful and profound silence. This was the pure and pleasing sacrifice which he offered to his Creator on earth; and which he now consummates with the Saints in eternal bliss.

The authorities for this chapter are the same as those mentioned in the preceding.

* See Mabill. vol. v. Annales Ord. Bened. p. 512.

CHAPTER III.

ST. ALBERIC. HE PLACES HIMSELF UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF ST. ROBERT. IS DISRESPECTFULLY TREATED BY THE MONKS OF MOLESME. HIS DAPARTURE FROM MOLESME. RECAL. DEPARTURE FOR CITEAUX. ELECTED ABBOT. HIS LIFE OF SEVERE PENANCE. HIS APPEAL TO ROME FOR THE SANCTION OF THE HOLY SEE. HIS REGULATIONS. HE CHANGES THE COLOUR OF THE HABIT. HE ADOPTS LAY-BROTHERS. HIS LAST SICKNESS, AND DEATH.

We are compelled by the silence of ancient writers to pass entirely over the birth and parentage of St. Alberic; and at once to view him as "a man of learning, well skilled in things both human and divine; a lover of the rule and of the brethren." [Parvum Exordium] He was one of the original hermits of Colan, who formed themselves into a community of Benedictine monks, under the superintendence of St. Robert. He accompanied that excellent superior, with whom he was united in the closest bonds of friendship, to the new foundation of Molesme, and there became his prior. When Robert left Molesme in disgust at the misconduct of his religious, he entrusted his authority to Alberic, who, dividing his cares with Stephen, vigorously applied himself to the restoration of relaxed discipline. He first employed the mildest and most endearing intreaties, then he had recourse to threats and chastisements to soften and change the stubborn hearts of the disobedient religious. But all his endeavours were fruitless. Deaf to his urgent solicitations, his cogent arguments, and his salutary corrections, they broke out into open rebellion, heaped upon him abusive language, cruelly scourged him and cast him into a

dungeon. There is no depth of iniquity to which a religious person may not fall when once he has cast off the fear of God. St. Alberic was ready to lay down his life for his brethren; but seeing that they repaid his love with hatred, he thought it best, on his releasement, to withdraw from the storm, and allow it to pass over. He accordingly withdrew to a place called Unicus. Thither Stephen and two other brethren followed him. They did not think it safe to remain with those who had given such unequivocal proof of having shaken off the yoke of Jesus Christ.

Alberic and Stephen returned to Molesme at the command of the Bishop of Langres. The meek Prior made no remonstrance, on account of the late bad treatment he had experienced; but conducted by the silver cord of obedience, he presented himself mute as a lamb—forgetful of all past injuries—and anxious by his kindness to soothe every angry feeling, and win back the disorderly to a sense of their duty.

His attention was soon directed by St. Stephen to relaxations still indulged by many of the brethren of Molesme. We have seen the result of this representation, in the union of these bosom friends with St. Robert in a successful arrangement for a final departure from Molesme, to seek a breathing-place for their fervour in the deserts of Citeaux.

When St. Robert was placed, by obedience, under the obligation of returning to Molesme, Alberic was canonically elected Abbot of Citeaux, notwithstanding his many refusals and expressions of unfitness. Indeed, he submitted to no easy and light burden. For he was told by his rule, that the abbot represents the person of Jesus Christ; and must ordain nothing but what is conformable to the commandments of God; that he must constantly keep in remembrance the fearful day of Judgment, when he will have to give an account both of his own doctrine and the

obedience of his disciples; that he must answer to the Chief Shepherd for the flock committed to his care, and if one be missing or lost through his negligence, wo to his own welfare; that he is the spiritual father of all in the monastery, and hence he is reminded of the necessity of preaching and exhorting more by his own measures and prudent conduct than by the smoothness and eloquence of his words, which may please the ear without penetrating and softening the heart. It was, however, a great relief in his solicitude to have Stephen for his prior and coadjutor in a portion of his responsibility.

St. Alberic joined his brethren in their manual labour, and boldly marched on before them in all the austerities of their sublime state. Whilst at work with his hands, that the spirit might not wander into the regions of forbidden or idle thought, he would frequently take the psalter, and pour forth his soul in fervent strains of prayer to Heaven. When all the brethren had retired to repose, which is exceedingly sweet after a day of hard labour and long fasting, he, unmindful of his advanced years, spent the greater part of the night in works of penance. He took rest barely sufficient for the support of nature, and this upon the naked boards. Long before his brethren rose to their matins, he was again busy with his psalter. Indeed, the difficulties of his position rendered the divine assistance which he obtained through prayer, necessary for his consolation and encouragement. Few joined the new community. Many railed against it as a combination of persons who had lost their reason.

About the end of the year 1099, Pascal II. sent two Legates into France to excommunicate King Philip for his open adulteries, and contempt of his Queen, Bertha. These Legates, Cardinals John and Benedict, heard, on their arrival in France, of the extraordinary life practised at Citeaux. They wished to be spectators of the great sanctity which had been reported to them by credible

witnesses; and when they saw it with their own eyes, they declared that half had not been told them. For they found angels in human bodies—in bodies so pale and emaciated by midnight vigils, hard labours, and long fasts, that they scarcely seemed clothed with flesh. They listened to every word from these holy men, as to something supernatural. But St. Alberic they heard with profound respect. They learnt from him the nature of the Institute, the customs and practices of the infant community; what labours had been performed and sufferings endured, before they were permitted to lead this life so congenial to their wishes; and in what manner Robert had been torn from them, and left them orphans—a butt to the sarcasms and falsehoods of neighbouring monasteries.

The Legates, moved with compassion at these representations, advised St. Alberic to send a deputation of two of his brethren to Rome to obtain for his rising congregation the sanction of the Holy See. St. Alberic replied that he could scarcely conceive how two of his monks, so entirely unaccustomed to the ways of the world, would be able to succeed in so important an undertaking. But at their instance, he summoned a chapter, and having carefully collected the opinions of his brethren, he dispatched by their advice John and Ilbodus, with letters from the Legates, from Hugh, Archbishop of Lyons, and the Bishop of Châlons, to Rome. From Rome they proceeded to Troja, in Apulia, where the Pope, at that time, was tarrying. The letters of recommendation which they presented to his Holiness, obtained for them a favourable audience; but when he had entertained them—had seen their wisdom, humility, and sanctity, he deemed them truly worthy of his esteem and good graces. He inquired what was the nature of the place called Citeaux—how it came to be a monastery, what number of religious it contained, what rule they adopted, what discipline and austerity they practised. He then called them his dear sons in Christ,

exhorted them to perseverance, confirmed their Institute by a Brief, took their monastery under the special protection of the Holy See, exempted it from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Châlons, with exception to the rights which the canons gave to bishops over monasteries; and concluded with an excommunication against any archbishop or bishop, emperor or king, ecclesiastical or civil person, who, being aware of the protection granted by the Holy See, should dare to molest the abbey. This Bull was dated the 27th of April, A.D. 1100, in the second year of the Pontificate of Pascal II.

The two religious hastened home to impart to their brethren the joyful tidings of success. St. Alberic, now supported by the approbation of Rome, drew up, with the consent of his community, several ordinances for the better observance of St. Benedict's Rule.

The first regarded the dress, which both in shape and quality of material, was to be reduced to the prescriptions of the 55th chapter of the Rule.

"Alberic and his brethren rejected all habits that were not mentioned in this chapter; they, therefore, would not wear garments with ample folds, nor garments of fur, shirts, nor hoods separated from the rest of the habit. St. Benedict allows the habit to vary according to climate, but for countries of a mean temperature, he gives it as his opinion that a garment called cuculla, (cowl) a tunic and a scapular, (shoes also, and stockings) are sufficient. At first, these were only the common habits worn by the peasants of the country. The stern old Benedictine looked for nothing picturesque; he had made himself poor for his Lord's sake, and he wore the dress of the poor among whom he lived, and with whom he worked, in the cold and heat, in the rain and in the sunshine."—[Cistercian Saints—St. Stephen, chap. vii.]

St. Alberic changed the colour of the greater part of the dress, substituting white for the dark brown, in all the

A CHOIR RELIGIOUS IN HIS COWL.
The Cistercian Order.

garments but the scapular with the pointed hood, which he allowed to remain dark, as before. The reasons for this change are matters more of conjecture than authentic history. The author of the beautiful life of St. Stephen in the "Cistercian Saints," gives the following account of it:—

"The reason assigned for the change of colour in the habit, is the devotion of St. Mary, observable in the order from the beginning. It was a standing law that all Cistercian monasteries should be 'founded and dedicated to the memory of the queen of heaven and earth, holy Mary;' (Nom. Cist. Inst. Cap. Gen., p. 1, c. xviii.) The hours of the Blessed Virgin were also recited very early after the foundation of Citeaux; and the angelic salutation (the latter part of the Ave Maria was not added till the sixteenth century. Vide Mabillon, Acta Sanct. Præf., vol. v.) was one of the common acts of devotion put into the mouth of even the lay brethren of the order. The immediate cause of the adoption of the white habit is mysterious; it seems difficult to account how it should all at once appear, without the sanction of any statute of the order, especially as it was opposed to the custom, if not to the rule of the primitive Benedictines. A tradition is even current in the order, that Alberic saw the Blessed Virgin in a vision, putting upon his shoulders the white garment; and that he changed the tawny colour of St. Mary Magdalene to the joyful colour sacred to the Mother of our Lord, in consequence of the consolation which the vision afforded him in the difficulties with which he was then struggling. The vision has not much historical authority, though the tradition of the order, and the strange circumstance of the change of colour itself, are in favour of its truth. The one thing certain, is, that it was assumed in honour of the spotless purity of St. Mary, the special patroness of the Cistercians; and the circumstance that she was chosen to be the peculiar saint of the rising order, is in itself charac-

teristic. One would have thought that the austerity of Alberic and Stephen would have led them to choose some martyr or some unbending confessor of the faith; but they rather raised their minds to her on whom the mind cannot rest without joy, though her own most blessed soul was pierced through with a sword. She was the spotless lily of the valley, in which the King of Heaven deigned to take up His abode; and the Cistercians thought it well that she should protect by her prayers their lowly houses, which were hid from the world in secluded vales, and make them also the dwelling-place of her Son.....The black monks reproached the Cistercians with wearing a garment fit only for a time of joy, whilst the monastic state was one of penitence. But the white monks answered, that the life of a monk was not only one of penitence, but was like that of the angels, and therefore they wore white garments to show the spiritual joy of their hearts. And notwithstanding their coarse bread and hard beds, there was a cheerfulness about the Cistercians which may, in a great measure be traced to what we should now call a sympathy with nature. Their life lay out of doors, amongst vineyards and corn-fields; their monasteries, as their names testify, were mostly situated in sequestered valleys, and were, by a law of the order, as old as the time of Alberic, never in towns, but in the country. From their constant meditation as they worked, they acquired a habit of joining their recollections of Scripture to natural objects; hence, also, the love for the Song of Solomon, which is evident in the earlier ascetic writers of the order. We shall see, in the course of this narrative, abundant proof that the white habit did not hide a gloomy or unfeeling heart."—Chap. vii.

Note. This is a testimony quoted with great pleasure; for the author of these simple but beautiful words, when he wrote them, was a Protestant clergyman. He is now a Priest of the Oratory. The vision in which the Blessed Virgin clothes St. Alberic in a white cowl, is told with great confidence in the ancient work: "Fasciculus Sanctorum Ordinis Cisterciensis," &c. Auctore Patre,

Dom. Pierre Le Nain—["Essai de l'Histoire de l'Ordre de Citeaux, vol. i. chap. xiv.] gives the following reason for the change of colour in the habit. The community of Citeaux believed themselves bound to substitute a grey habit for the dark brown one; because grey was the common coarse cloth worn by the peasantry of their days; and therefore, it was the cloth marked out for them by the rule.—[Peter the Venerable, of Cluny, seems to allege this reason, in an Epistle to St. Bernard.—Epistle St. Bernardi, ccxxviii.]

A short question unfortunately confronts this statement and renders it inadequate to meet the difficulty before us. How came the scapular with its hood to remain of the dark colour, together with the whole dress of the convert brothers? It is certain that St. Alberic and his fervent community, performed the dedication of their monastery to God, under the special patronage and protection of the Blessed Virgin; and drew up a permanent rule to the following effect: "Since the illustrious life, the exalted dignity, and the admirable sanctity of Blessed Mary, the glorious Mother of God, enlighten, direct, and instruct the whole Church of God: all the churches of our monasteries shall be henceforth founded and dedicated in her honour."—[Ex. lib. Definit. antiquarum, dest. iii. chap 1.] John, Abbot of Citeaux, in his "Liber Privilegiorum," remarks: "This was the first Order in the Western Church dedicated in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

Now, is it not natural to suppose that this special devotion to the spotless Mother of God, and enrolment in her service, would be indicated by an appropriate symbol in that truly symbolical age? Is it not a characteristic feature in almost every religious institution that has

Fr. Chrysost. Henriquez Hortensi, ejusdem Ordinis monacho, 1623. He gives many authorities for this vision, both in this and a later work, the "Menologium," &c., Aug. 5th. See, also, Mabillon, Annales, Ord. Bened. lib. lxxi. vol. v. p. 498.

arisen in the Church, to display in its dress some badge indicative of its nature? St. Alberic, therefore, with the consent of his brethren, adopted in the greater portion of the Cistercian habit, the colourless white emblematic of Mary's immaculate purity; leaving, however, sufficient of the dark brown in the scapular and hood, to point them out as children of the great family of St. Benedict; and remind them of penance and humility. The convert brothers were not, at that period, admitted to the privileges of a solemn and religious profession of vows. Hence they retained the colour of convert brothers in other Benedictine communities. This appears to be the true history of the matter divested of the legend. There is no difficulty in granting, that if the light coloured cloth was the cheapest and coarsest in the country, this might be a minor and concomitant motive for the change of colour in question. If the vision of the Blessed Virgin to St. Alberic be deemed worthy of credit, after a careful examination of the authorities upon which it rests, the statement we have just made is perfectly in accordance with it; for it then becomes the vision carried out into practice.

A confirmation of this view of the question may be deduced from the beautiful words of Gregory XI., less than 300 years after the foundation of Citeaux: "In the golden vesture of Christ's spouse, the Church, who, surrounded with variety, has been made by her beloved, fair, and beautiful above the sons of men, the Cistercian Order, eminent both in the integrity of its faith, and the solidity of its hope, stands at the right hand. Entirely devoted to holy obedience, and distinguished by its piety and veneration to the ever Blessed Mary, even from its foundation, it stands forth brilliant in charity, preserves all the comeliness of chastity, and sheds around a halo of splendour by the holiness of its conversation. The white Nazarenes, that is, its professors, living under the strict

observance of a strict rule, present, by their assiduity in prayer, to the King of Kings, and to the Queen of Heaven, their phials full of odoriforous perfumes."—[Vide Fasciculus quoted above.]

"With all their severity," says the author of St. Stephen's life we quote so frequently, "there is a grace about the Cistercian habit, from the fond associations with which they connected it. In the black scapular worn over the white tunic, broad about the shoulders, then falling in a narrow strip to the feet, they saw the form of our Lord's cross, and thus they loved to bear it about with them even in sleep." [Martenne, Thes. Anec. Tom. V. p. 1650, 48.]

The second important matter mentioned in the ordinances of St. Alberic, is the regulation of the diet. Dishes of divers kinds of food, grease and whatever opposed the purity of the rule as interpreted by the primitive monks, were banished the refectory. "After half-a-night spent in singing the divine office, in reading and meditation, and a day spent in agricultural labour, they assembled to what was, during a great part of the year (from the fourteenth of September, to Easter,) their single meal, which consisted solely of what St. Benedict allowed; and that procured by the sweat of their brow. Their fare was a pound of the convent bread, and two messes of vegetables, boiled, not with the culinary accuracy of Cluny, but in the plainest manner." During the remainder of the year. a collation of similar food was allowed in the evening, [Life of St. Stephen, Ch. VII.]

The third regulation referred to their possessions. St. Alberic and his brethren did not see, either in his life or in his rule that St. Benedict possessed churches, altars, oblations, burial-grounds, tithes belonging to other men, bakehouses, mills, farms, or serfs; therefore they rejected all these things. They did not by any means intend to do away with the lands or offices of the monastery; on the contrary, they had already accepted a grant of land

with the serfs, and all that was upon it, from the Viscount Beaune, and we may be sure that both mills and bake-houses were already in full operation at Citeaux; for St. Benedict's rule prescribes "that all things necessary, such as water, a mill, a garden, a bakehouse, should if possible be contained within the monastery, and that divers arts should be practised there." [Chap. 66.] Monks were to be their own millers and bakers, farmers and gardeners; and doubtless such strict observers of the rule as the brethren of Citeaux had already sunk wells and enclosed a garden.....The wood of Citeaux was, therefore, already an active scene, where the monks might be seen working in silence, broken only by the stroke of the spade, or the noise of the water turning the wheels of the mill, or the bell calling them from their labour. The meaning of the above regulation, then, was, that they were not to possess large domains, with wood and water, corn-fields and vineyards, which they did not cultivate themselves, but let out to tenants.....But Peter the Venerable asked: "How is it possible for monks fed on poor vegetable diet, when even that scanty fare is cut off by fasts, to work like common labourers in the burning heat, in showers of rain and snow, and in bitter cold? Besides, he objected, it was indecent that monks, who are the fine linen of the sanctuary, should be begrimed with dirt and bent down with rustic labours." [Pet. Ven. Ep. 1, 28.]

The good part of Mary must not thus yield to that of Martha. And yet Stephen and his companions found it possible to do all this. Their worn out bodies did not sink under their heavy burdens, nor were the garments of their souls less white, because they were thus exposed to suffer from the inclemency of the season. It was, indeed, inexplicable even to their contemporaries, how they thus could live; but the secret lay in the fervency of the spirit, which kept up the lagging flesh and blood; their lives were above nature, and because for Christ's sake, they

A CHOIR RELIGIOUS IN HIS WORKING HABIT.
The Cisterrian Order.

gave up church-lands and titles, in order to be poor, He bore them up, so that they did not faint under their labours. Besides they were not the less like the lowly Mary sitting at the Lord's feet, because they worked in the fields; suffering is not incompatible with the better part. The Order which produced St. Bernard cannot be accused of not being contemplative. While their bodies were bent in agricultural labours, their souls were raised to Heaven. Again, they had an expedient by which they were enabled to remain within a short distance of the cloister, however scattered their farms might be, and thus lose no time in journeying to and from the place of their labour, and they could always return to the duties of the choir, and be within the monastery at the times set apart for meditation. Alberic at once felt the difficulty of keeping up the choir service, when the monks might be obliged to sleep in the farm-houses, or, as they were called granges of the monastery, and he determined on obviating it by turning to account the institution of lay brethren, which had subsisted for a long time in the Benedictine Order. It arose from the nature of things, and not by a regular distinction into choir and lay brethren, at the time, of the taking of the vow, as it was afterwards to be. Amongst a great number of monks, many could neither read nor write, and had not faculties for learning the choir services; it was natural that these should be employed in the many menial offices which a large monastery would require. Hence arose the institution of lay brethren; it however appears to have taken its most systematic shape at the very beginning of the Cistercian Order. Some of them dwelt in the Abbey itself, others in the scattered and lonely granges around it; they kept the flocks and the herds of the community, and were its tailors, shoemakers, and blacksmiths. Those who were in the granges were excused, from the fasts of the Order, except in

Advent, and on the Fridays from the fourteenth of September to Lent. [Monasticon, Hist. Cap. Gen. I. 14.]

Whenever the bell of the Abbey rang for a canonical hour they fell on their knees, and in heart joined the brethren who sang the Office in the Abbey church. There were thus in every Cistercian abbey "two monasteries, one of the lay brethren, another of the clerics." [Dial. inter Clun. et Cist. III. 43.]

The choir brethren were thus enabled always to work within a short distance of the abbey, and were strictly forbidden to remain a whole night in any of the granges, without pressing necessity. The relations between the choir and lay brethren were of the closest kind; instead of being treated as slaves, as they were by their feudal lords, these poor children of the soil, and artizans, were looked upon as brothers, and were by a special law of the Order to partake in all spiritual advantages, as though they were monks, which in fact they were, in all but the name, for they made their vows in presence of the Abbot, like other brethren. Politicians, who love equality and liberty, may thank the monks for placing on a level the nobleman and the villain, and for ennobling the cultivator of the soil by stooping down to his lowliness, and partaking of his labours. The world may thank Alberic for this scheme, by which the choir brother imparted his spiritual goods to the poor lay brother, who in turn by his labour gave him time for singing the praises of God during the night, and for meditating on his glories continually. The disciples of Alberic and Stephen in after-times followed their steps; and Alanus, one of the greatest of the school-men, finished his life, in the rough and lowly labours of a lay brother of Citeaux, and was represented in a recumbent figure on his tomb, in their habit, holding a rosary in his hand.* There are few more

* "Alanus de Insulis was of immense renown in the university of Paris, in the 11th and 12th centuries. Of him, too, is related a

A LAY BROTHER IN HIS WORKING HABIT.
The Cistercian Order.

touching pictures in the annals of Citeaux, than the story [Manriquez in ann. 1129, C. VI.] of the poor lay brother sitting to watch by night in the lonely grange, thinking of his brethren in the abbey, while they celebrated the feast of the Assumption, and repeating over and over again the Angelic salutation with such devotion, that the angels brought news of it to St. Bernard, then preaching on the subject of the feast-day, at Clairvaux." [Life of St. Stephen, Cistercian Saints, Ch. VII.]

[See Appendix, Note K.]

St. Alberic not only conformed to the strict letter of St. Benedict's rule in exterior things, but he endeavoured to infuse the spirit of it—that which touches and purifies the heart into the souls of his brethren. All their neighbours were in astonishment at the austerity and perfection of these new solitaries; but they, far from self satisfaction,

memorable legend, which ancient painters may have rendered familiar to the lovers of their arts. He had proposed, on a certain day, to preach on the Blessed Trinity, and to give a perfect knowledge of that mystery to his auditors. On the preceding day, as he took a solitary walk on the margin of the stream, he saw a little boy scooping out a small trench, and trying to fill it with water from a shell, which escaped through the sandy bottom of the trench, as fast as he filled it. [This seems borrowed from the Life of St. August.] 'What are you doing, my sweet child?' asked Alanus. 'I am going to put all the water of the river into my trench,' was the reply. 'And when do you think,' continued the philosopher, 'you will succeed in this grand design?' 'I shall succeed before you will perform what you have engaged to do.' 'What have I engaged, child!' 'Why, you said that to-morrow you would, in a sermon, explain the Trinity by your science.' Alanus, at this reply, was seized with compunction and terror. He returned home in deep meditation on the words which had been so strangely addressed to him, and lamenting bitterly his presumption. On the morrow, when the hour of the sermon arrived, a great crowd being assembled, Alanus mounted the pulpit, and instead of a theme, uttered these words; 'It is sufficient that you have seen Alanus;' and immediately descending, withdrew, leaving the people in astonishment. The same day he left Paris and travelled into Burgundy, where he repaired to the Abbey of Citeaux," and became, &c. as above. [Mores Catholici, p. 159.]

aimed at still higher degrees of mortification and sanctity. The breathing of the Holy Spirit daily strengthened them, and gave fresh energy to their ardour in the path of salvation, so that they sighed for heaven alone; they shut themselves out from the world, and walked with angels on earth. They were as attentive to each particular action, as if no amount of diligence or application could ever produce fatigue, or make them droop through weariness. They observed so great a moderation in their sleep, so severe a temperance in their diet, that, in the language of the Apostle, they literally used these things as if they used them not. Their absolute disengagement from all earthly cares seemed to render them no longer subject to the laws of mortality. In their poor and silent habitation there was no tumult, no noise, no confusion, no murmuring, no disputation, no interruption to their pious exercises. The Holy Mary, the Queen of Angels, says the "Annalist," was the star which poured down a flood of light upon St. Alberic; St. Alberic reflected the heavenly splendour upon St. Stephen, and St. Stephen communicated the radiancy all brilliant as he had received it, to his brethren. A scene of beautiful reflection and participation of divine light, thus filled the whole domain of Citeaux.

One thing alone was to these fervent souls a subject of sadness. Few persons joined their little community, and they were fearful that it might be crushed in its infancy. Many expressed their admiration; but few had the courage to confront the austerities of the holy state. God, however, consoled them by adding, in His own appointed time, other sheep to their small flock. Amongst these, there is one whose vocation was so remarkable that it deserves our notice. The story is related both in the, "Exordium," and by Vincent of Beauvais. We borrow it, as it is told in English, from "The Life of Stephen." [Cistercian Saints, chap. viii.]

"It is said, that one day (in the year A.D. 1104), the

community was surprised by the entrance of a clerk, who offered himself as a novice. The porch of the monastery at which the new-comer knocked, was not an inviting one; it was not an imposing archway with a large gate, with bolts and bars; it was a poor door of wicker work, at which hung a huge iron knocker, at the sound of which a porter appeared with his usual salutation of Deo gratias, as if he would say 'Thanks be to God that He hath sent us a stranger to feed and entertain.' This time, however, the new-comer seemed to be no stranger; he seemed to recognize the porter, though the monk could not recollect ever to have seen him before. When brought to the abbot, he appeared to know him also, as well as the prior Stephen, and all the brethren. At length, he solved the mystery, by relating his history. He was a clerk who, when a student of the schools at Lyons, saw in a vision, a valley stretched at the foot of a mountain, and on the mountain was a city of surpassing beauty, on which none could gaze without joy, as its radiant towers crowned the eminence on which it was built. The beholder felt a strange and irresistible desire to enter its gates and dwell there. Around the base of the mountain, however, was a broad river, the waters of which flowed about it, and were too deep for the traveller to ford. As he roamed about in quest of a place where he might cross it, he saw upon the bank twelve or fourteen poor men washing their garments in the stream. Amongst them, was one clad in a white garment of dazzling brightness, and his countenance and form were different from the rest; he went about helping the poor men to wash the spots off their clothes; when he had helped one, he went to help another. The clerk went up to this august person and said, 'What men are ye?' And he answered, 'These poor men are doing penance, and washing themselves from their sins; I am the Son of God, Jesus Christ, without whose aid neither they nor any one else can do good. This beautiful city which thou seest is

Paradise, where I dwell—he who has washed his clothes white, that is, done penance for his sins, shall enter into it. Thou thyself hast been searching long enough for the way to enter into it, but there is no other way but this one, which leads to it.' After these words, the sleeper awoke, and pondered over the vision. Soon after, he returned home from the schools, and related to the Bishop of Châlons, with whom he was intimate, what he had seen in sleep. The bishop advised him to quit the world for the cloister, and above others recommended the new monastery of Citeaux. Thither the clerk went, and he found everything unpromising enough; the place was barren and desolate, and the brethren dwelling "with the wild beasts." The gate of the monastery did not look a whit more inviting; but what was his astonishment when he saw the porter who answered to the sound of the rude knocker; he immediately saw that he was one of the men whom he had seen washing their clothes white in the stream. On seeing the abbot and the other brethren, he observed the same thing, and he at once fell upon his knees at the feet of Alberic, and begged to be received as a novice. He became one of the community under the name of Robert, and lived at Citeaux in great perfection. He was made prior when Stephen was elected abbot. He died a death precious both in the sight of God and men.

"St. Alberic having presided over his flock with so much advantage to their spiritual welfare, that 'scarcely one,' says the 'Annalist,' 'departed this world, without leaving behind him the odour of sanctity, had now arrived at the termination of his earthly career, and was about to receive the recompense of his labours in the Lord's service. Perceiving that his last hour drew nigh, he wished his brethren to be assembled to hear his parting instructions. For a moment he seemed to be in an extacy; then recovering his presence of mind, he exclaimed, 'O what happiness is yours! God has prepared for you such glory as will

impart to you the felicity of the angels.' The brethren expressed in warm terms, their gratitude to God for this glimpse of their future bliss. Then, surrounding the bed of their dying father, they fervently implored for him the assistance of the Blessed Virgin. The holy abbot, joining in their supplication, said most feelingly, 'Mary, holy Virgin, pray for me.' In pronouncing these words, his countenance shone with surpassing lustre; and in this happy moment he gave up his soul into the hands of Jesus Christ in the year of our Lord 1109. St. Stephen, as prior, had to celebrate the funeral obsequies. When the procession had returned from the grave to the chapter room, he endeavoured to wipe away the tears of his brethren by these comfortable and consoling words, which have been preserved in all the ancient writers of the order.*

"All of us have, alike, a share in this great loss, and I am but a poor comforter, who myself need comfort. Ye have lost a venerable father and ruler of your souls; I have lost, not only a father and ruler, but a friend, a fellow soldier, and a chief warrior in the battles of the Lord, whom our venerable father, Robert, from the very cradle of our monastic institute had brought up in one and the same convent, in admirable learning and piety. He is gone from us, but not from God; and if not from God, then not from us; for this is the right and property of saints, that when they quit this life they leave their body to their friends, and carry away their friends with them in their mind. We have amongst us this dear body and singular pledge of our beloved father, and he himself has carried us all away with him in his mind with an affectionate love—yea, if he himself is borne up to God, and joined with Him in undivided love, he has joined us too, who are in him to God. What room is there for grief? Blessed is the lot—more blessed he to whom that lot has fallen, most blessed

* We borrow the translation from the work to which we are already so greatly indebted—St. Stephen's Life. [Chap. ix.]

we to be carried up to such a presence, for nothing can be more joyful for the soldiers of Christ than to leave this garment of flesh, and to fly away to Him for love of whom they have borne so many toils. The warrior has got his reward, the runner has grasped his prize, the conqueror has won his crown; he who has taken possession prays for a palm for us. Why, then, should we grieve? Why mourn for him who is in joy? Why be cast down for him who is glad? Why do we throw ourselves before God with murmurs and mournful words, when he, who has been borne up to the stars, is pained at our grief, if the blessed can feel pain; he who, by an earnest longing prays that we may have a like consummation. Let us not mourn for the soldier who is at rest; let us mourn for ourselves who are placed in the front of the battle, and let us turn our sad and mournful words into prayers, begging our Father who is in triumph, not to suffer the roaring lion and savage enemy to triumph over us."

CHAPTER IV.

ST. STEPHEN'S BIRTH PLACE. HIS YOUTH. IN THE PRIORY OF SHERBOURNE. HIS TRAVELS. HIS JOINING THE COMMUNITY OF MOLESME. HIS ELECTION TO BE THE ABBOT OF CITEAUX HIS EXCLUSION OF THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY'S COURT FROM THE MONASTERY. HIS CORRECTION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. HIS TRIALS OF POVERTY AND AFFLICTIONS, FROM THE FREQUENT DEATHS OF HIS BRETHREN. HE RECEIVES A VISION FROM HEAVEN.

ST. STEPHEN, surnamed Harding, was a Saxon born in England, of wealthy and respectable parents, a little before the Norman Conquest. God had special designs in favour of this child of benediction, and had him enrolled in his service, ere the world had engaged his heart, or tarnished the purity of his soul. As God withdrew Henoch from the earth, lest his innocence might be corrupted by the seductions of wicked men; so did he prompt the parents of Stephen to place him in the secure asylum of a religious house. This was the Priory of Sherbourne, of the Order of St. Benedict, in Dorsetshire; which in the year A. D. 1122, was erected into an Abbey by Roger, Bishop of Salisbury. Under the shade of this peaceful retreat, Stephen was instructed in reading, writing, music, and the services of the church. Thus like Samuel he spent his childhood in the courts of the Lord, amidst the beauty and variety of the ceremonies with which the peaceful round of monastic life was diversified.

St. Stephen longed, when he grew up in years, for more information than the poor Priory of Sherbourne could

supply from its scanty resources. He travelled first to Scotland, at that time the rallying point of the Saxon race from the power of the conqueror. Scotland was governed by Malcolm III, who had married Margaret the grand-niece of Edward the Confessor; a lady eminently distinguished for her virtues. Here he was safe; which he could scarcely be in a Saxon monastery, exposed to the aggressions of William the Norman. From Scotland St. Stephen bent his steps to Paris. In that city, despising all vain and curious science he applied his mind most assiduously to the study of the Holy Scriptures; and soon acquired the light which was to conduct him in the path of salvation. His unwearied diligence and discriminating mind failed not, in a short period to make him a proficient in Biblical learning. But however deeply he penetrated the truths of the Holy Scripture for the improvement of his understanding, he drew still greater advantages from them by the glow of fervour and charity which they enkindled in his heart. "He was courteous in speech, blythe in countenance, with a soul ever joyful in the Lord." Having laid these solid foundations of virtue, though still but in the dawn of manhood, he departed from Paris with a tried companion, on a pilgrimage to the tombs of SS. Peter and Paul. They took every means their piety could suggest to draw down upon their undertaking the benediction of heaven. They recited together every day the entire Psalter, and observed strict silence, when they were not singing the divine praises. In this manner St. Stephen preserved that spirit of devotion and recollection, which he had imbibed in his youth, in the Priory of Sherbourne.

After viewing at Rome the tombs of the illustrious martyrs, he returned to France, found St. Robert and his small band of zealous religious, struggling with the difficulties of their new foundation of Molesme. His heart cleaved to them immediately; and here he desired to make his abiding place. But he was warmly attached to the

friend who had accompanied him in his excursions; and this friend did not wish to remain at Molesme. A momentary conflict between this attachment and his vocation ensued. But the sword of the Divine Spirit prevailed, and cut assunder the tie which nature had so firmly bound together, and now so zealously defended. The parting same, and the bitter pang passed away; for Stephen having received the habit from the hands of St. Robert, found instead of the one he had lost, many choice and prudent friends. "The angels in heaven," says the annalist, "rejoiced at his conversion; the demons were furious with envy; St. Robert, St. Alberic, and the holy community blessed and thanked God, for having sent them a brother of great promise."

St. Stephen's zeal in the reformation of Molesme, and his co-operation with St. Robert and St. Alberic, are sufficiently detailed in the preceeding lives; we have heard his discourse at the funeral of St. Alberic, we must now view him as Abbot of Citeaux.

Immediately after St. Alberic's death, the members of Citeaux fixed their eyes upon Stephen, then Prior, and elected him Abbot, whilst he absented himself from chapter, with the hope that they would pass him by and forget him. He quietly, however, acquiesced in the decision of his brethren, when he learnt that it had been unanimous. With what spirit he entered upon this onerous charge is thus beautifully described in the Cistercian Saints. "We must recollect that St. Stephen had been a dweller in the wilderness and forest; he aspired to the highest Christian perfection, so that he would not have been contented even with Cluny. Though a man of learning, he wished to become foolish for Christ's sake; he wished to be perfectly destitute, and to depend for his daily bread, and his coarse habit, on God's providence. No record remains of any action or saying of his against the stately order of Cluny, but his vocation lay another

way. God had kindled a divine love in his heart, and it was fire in his bones, and would not let him rest till he had accomplished the work which he was sent on earth to perform. God's saints are His workmanship, and the same Almighty goodness which has made the lilies, and also given its own beauty to the rose, which has created flowers, precious stones, and animals, each with a different glory, has also in the creation of His grace variously moulded the souls of his saints. Stephen's lot was to be of those who, by their utter destitution of human helps, most of all illustrate the new order of things, which our blessed Lady celebrated in the "Magnificat." Out of weakness he was to be made strong; with his perfect poverty, his coarse and tattered garment, his body bowed down by labour and mortification, he was to bring an order of men into the Church, who beat down pomp and luxury, intellect and power. His wooden staff was more powerful than the sceptre of kings, and his fragile frame was the centre, around which the whole of the saintly prelates of the church, who fought against luxury and simony clustered and arranged their battle; the pre-eminence which God gave to His saint in after life, is a full vindication of his conduct in these his first years, when he was a poor despised monk, treated by his brethren as an enthusiast and fanatic." [Ch. III.]

St. Stephen appointed Robert, the monk who saw the vision, for his Prior. With the dignity, Stephen inherited the mantle of his predecessors. He saw in all its extent the responsibility of his situation, and forgetting the things that were behind, he pressed on with fresh ardour to the mark of more exalted piety, and complete disengagement from the affections of the earth. Hence in the consultation which he held with his brethren, upon the best means of carrying out these views, he proposed for their consideration, the evil consequences of frequent communication with secular people; for some portion of

the spirit of the world was generally left behind such intercourse, inconsistent with the life of a solitary. Hugh, Duke of Burgundy, son of Odo, the Founder of Citeaux, imitated his father's example, and frequented the church of the monastery on festivals. He was accompanied by a large retinue of his nobles, whose splendid apparel ill-accorded with the poverty and simplicity of the church. But the joyous hilarity and tumult generally attendant upon the presence of a monarch, the jingling of armour, and the glitter of gold and silver ornaments, and the echo of jests and laughter, were strikingly at variance with the silence and gravity of the monk, whose conversation ought to be in heaven.

St. Stephen trembled for his brethren, though he knew their virtue, when exposed to such scenes and gaities as these. With their concurrence he determined to remove the danger; and humbly but firmly requested the Duke not to trouble the repose of his monastery any more by the attendance of his Court. He thus shut out from his enclosure a noble and generous patron—one who was ready to relieve the wants of any emergency, and to throw the shield of his power over the rising community, in any danger. He knew the false construction that many would place upon this proceeding; the terms of harshness, folly, and ingratitude, with which it would be designated and condemned. But he had weighed the consequences, and he preferred extreme poverty to dissipation, and the friendship of God to the favour of princes.

St. Stephen loved silence with the zeal of the illustrious solitary of Edessa, St. Ephrem, who impressed its observance upon the minds of his religious, in these beautiful and moving words: "When there is silence in the mind when the heart rests, when the hush of the world has, breathed over the spirit, when the mind, self-left, feels itself in its lonliness; then comes the sweet and sacred communication with heaven. Possess the quiet of silence, and it

will be to you a citadel; it will elevate you above the reach of the passions, and permit no dart of the enemy to reach you. Silence joined with the fear of God is the fiery chariot in which you must ascend from these lower regions, in order to contemplate the throne of God. Silence is the mystic ladder which reacheth from the earth to the celestial Jerusalem; the royal way to the kingdom of glory, the mother of compunction, the friend of penance, the tabernacle of humility, the searcher of the thoughts, the author of discretion, the serenity of the mind, the joy of the heart, the bridle of the tongue, the prison of the passions, the parent of kindness, the fruitful field of Christ, and the protectress of all virtues. Possess silence, and you will possess the better part which shall not be taken from you. Mary sat in silence at our Lord's feet, and employed herself with him alone. The Lord does not wish you to seek your recreation in the distractions of this life; but to be in peace and security, away from the vain and unprofitable cares of the world. He is anxious to deliver you from the toilsome bondage of Egypt, to lead you into the wilderness into holy silence, that the pillar of a cloud may illuminate your path, the manna, the bread of quietness nourish you, and that you may journey in confidence to the land of your eternal inheritance." [St. Ephrem's Sermons.] How well the poet sings upon this subject—

"Some angels guide my pencil, while I draw
What nothing less than angels can exceed—
Good men on earth devoted to the skies.
Though Nature shakes, how soft to lean on heav'n!
To lean on Him on whom archangels lean!
With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,
They stand collecting ev'ry beam of thought,
Till their hearts kindle with divine delight;
For all their thoughts, like angels, seen of old
In Israel's dream, come from, and go to heav'n."

[Night Thoughts viii.]

God rewarded, at a later period, St. Stephen's faith and

confidence, in thus securing for his brethren this favourite virtue. For, in after years, the duke's favour returned; and he slept side by side with his father in the porch of the abbey church.

St. Stephen likewise thought that the vases and various other ornaments which the duke and his attendants had given to the church were not only contrary to that strict poverty which he and his religious had solemnly embraced, but might in the end lead to envy and curiosity. He, therefore, thanked the duke for all past favours, and declined the acceptance of anything more of this nature. He ordained, likewise, with the approbation of his brethren, that the crosses should be no longer of gold or silver, but of iron or wood painted; the lamps and candlesticks were to be of iron; the censors, of brass or iron; the materials of the sacred vestments of the plainest kind, without any fringes of gold or silver; the deacon and subdeacon were not to wear either tunics or dalmatics; copes were entirely banished; and the chalices were to be only of silver gilt.

In these views candour compels the admission, that St. Stephen was singular, and made no appeal through the avenue of the senses, to the weak and unlettered mind, though many such must have existed amongst the convert brethren. Hence, his regulations for the Church have only been partially followed by his children in succeeding ages. Few persons can see the propriety of depriving God's temple, of its becoming splendour and impressive ornaments, for the purpose of inculcating a lesson, which may be taught in so many other efficient ways. St. Stephen's intention in all this was the rejection of costliness, pomp, and every unnecessary ornament, that he and his brethren might resemble as much as possible, in every department of their monastery, the poverty of Jesus Christ. Hence, he would have poverty reign in the church, accompanied, however, with neatness and decency. Martenne informs

us that the church of Citeaux, in St. Stephen's time, was standing when he visited the monastery, beside a vast and splendid edifice of later erection; and yet, notwithstanding this strange contrast, appeared beautiful in its simplicity and elegant proportions. This was not the first one built of wood, but the second Church of Citeaux, and consecrated, he says, in the year A.D. 1106. [Voy. Lit. i, 223.] "St. Hugh," observes the author of the Cistercian Saints, "would have the Church all glorious within, and her clothing without of wrought gold; but Stephen wished her to be like her Lord, in whom was found no comeliness that men should desire Him; but Stephen's pastoral staff was a crooked stick, such as an old man might carry; St. Hugh's was overlaid with foliage wrought in silver mixed with ivory; yet the souls of both were the workmanship of that One Blessed Spirit, who divideth to every man severally as He willeth. Though the Abbot of Cluny took advantage of all the treasures of art and nature, and turned them to the service of God, while on the other hand, Stephen, in many cases rejected the help of external religion, yet both could find a place in the Catholic Church, whose worship is not carnal, nor yet so falsely spiritual as to cease to be the body of the Lord.—[Chap. x.]

St. Stephen beheld in God the good Shepherd whose conduct he was bound to imitate. "I will feed my sheep," says God to his prophet, "in the mountains of Israel, by the rivers, and in all the habitations of the land! I will feed them in the most fruitful pastures; there shall they rest on the green grass, and be fed in fat pastures upon the mountains of Israel." [Ezek. xxxiv.] The green grass and the fruitful pastures to which St. Stephen led forth his little flock, were the Holy Scriptures, which nourish the soul with pious thoughts, and open to the eyes of the mind the sublime mysteries of divine faith. He wrote, therefore, for the benefit of his community, and with the assistance of some of his brethren a very correct copy of

the Latin Bible, which he collated with innumerable manuscripts, and during the progress of which he consulted many learned Jews on the Hebrew text. This most valuable MS., says Alban Butler, is preserved at Citeaux (that is before the French Revolution) in four folio volumes. Besides the private reading and study of the Holy Scripture, portions of it were read every day during dinner; so that no one could plead ignorance of God's hallowed Word. And this, be it remembered, was practised in monasteries 400 years before the Reformation.

Much abuse and even calumny was heaped upon St. Stephen and his community, by the religious of neighbouring monasteries, who saw in the strict discipline of Citeaux a censure upon their own relaxation. But all who wish to live piously, says the Apostle, shall suffer persecution. The fervent brotherhood of Citeaux was not to be an exception. Upon the steps of calumny and misrepresentation, followed the iron hand of poverty and destitution. The Duke of Burgundy, offended at the exclusion of his court from Citeaux, withheld his liberality; and many others followed his example. This loss of friends, together with a failure in the crops, brought the monastery to absolute beggary; and no kind hand came with timely relief. Yet Stephen did not change his smiling countenance; but cheered his drooping brethren with earnest and consoling words, and hoped against hope; for he knew that the Lord would not abandon his servants and permit them to die of want in the depth of the forest. When the cellarian brought him word that there was only enough for one day's provision in the house, he said, "Saddle me two asses." He himself mounted one; a lay brother mounted the other. He then ordered his companion to beg from door to door in a certain village; while he himself went to beg in another, and he appointed a place where they should meet after making their rounds.....After having gone through the village, begging as he went, with a face radiant with

joy, for never was he more like his blessed Lord, he met his lay brother returning from his task; on comparing notes, the brother's wallet was found heavier than the Superior's. "Where hast thou been begging?" said the abbot, with a smile, "I see thou hast been gleaning in thicker stubble than I." The lay brother answered, "The priest whom you knew full well, filled my wallet;" and he mentioned the priest's name. The abbot at once recognised the priest to be one who had obtained his benefice by simony. He groaned aloud, and said, "Alas! for thee; why didst thou receive aught there? thou didst not know, then, that that priest had been simoniacally ordained; and what he has accepted is leprosy and rapine. As the Lord liveth, of all that he has given us, we will taste nothing, He then called some shepherds who were near the spot. and emptied all the contents of the wallet into their laps." [Cist. Saints, chap. xi.] Upon similar grounds he refused a thousand marks of silver from the Emperor Frederick. Such were his unworldly ways of meeting difficulties with which his community was oppressed.

"The time of this downright beggary of Citeaux, was a long dreary season. It was of no great consequence during Lent; but Lent passed away, and Easter came without alleviation. Still the monks buoyed up by the cheerfulness of their abbot, did not allow their spirits to flag, and only rejoiced the more because they suffered for Christ's sake. At length Pentecost came, and it was found that there was hardly bread in the house to last out the day; nevertheless the brethren prepared for the mass of that great day with ecstacies of joy. They began to chaunt the olemn service with overflowing hearts, and before the mass was over God rewarded their faith, for succours arrived at the gate of the monastery from an unexpected source. "In these and the like events," says the old monk who relates it, "the man of God, Stephen, weighing within himself how true are those words of Scripture, 'They who

fear the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good,' looked with wonder on the bounty and mercy of God on himself and his brethren: more and more did he progress in holy religion, and gloried in the straits of blessed poverty, as in all manner of riches." At length the crisis came, even after the mercy of God on Whit-Sunday. Their sufferings were not over—nay, they were at their height, and with them proportionately rose the abbot's faith."—[Cist. Saints, Ibid.]

Though St. Stephen did not blush at his poverty, nor dread the shame of a mendicant life; yet he knew that it is a monk's duty to remain in his cloister, and not to appear in public and make himself conspicuous in the busy haunts of men. He was satisfied, therefore, with one instance of profound humility; and now, when pressed again by urgent want, prompted by an impulse from God, he said to one of his brethren: "Go to the market at Vezelay, and buy three waggons, and three teams of horses, and bring home all that we have need of in bread and other provisions." "Give me, Rev. Father, wherewith to make the purchases which you mention, and I am quite ready," replied the brother. "God will supply you with money," calmly rejoined the holy abbot, "and send his angel to guard you on your journey." The obedient brother hastened to Vezelay, met with a gentleman to whom he explained his errand; and this gentlemen, together with a friend who was on his death-bed, advanced sufficient money to procure every thing that the brother had mentioned to them. When the monk had thus so shortly and so surprisingly completed the commissions of his superior, he hurried homewards as fast as the train of waggons would permit. When he got near the monastery he sent word to the abbot that he was coming, and how accompanied. Stephen, in the holy rapture of his heart, assembled the chapter and said: "The God of mercy, the Lord God of mercy has frankly and bountifully dealt with

us. Yea, nobly indeed, generously indeed, hast Thou done, Thou who providest for us, our Shepherd, opening Thine hand and filling our poverty with plenteousness." Then the abbot put on his sacred vestments and took his pastoral staff in his hand, and with the whole convent in procession, the cross and holy water solemnly borne before him, went to meet the brother and his convoy at the abbey gate. This was the last of the trials which Stephen had to undergo, from the failure of the temporalities of his convent. The alms of the faithful flowed in apace, and the cellarian had never again to report an empty granary to the abbot.—[Cisterc. Saints, chap. xi.]

But trials of a more afflicting nature than penury now assailed Stephen's patience. In the years 1111—12, a mortal disease became prevalent in the country; but no where did it rage more violently than at Citeaux. It attacked the community, and Stephen saw his spiritual children dying off one by one before his eyes. And these victims to the ruthless malady were the zealous labourers, who had borne with him the heat and the burden of the day. It was his duty to attend the sick bed of each brother, to administer to him the rites of Holy Church, to hold the cross to his dying lips, and to whisper in sweet words of comfort, the firm hope of a brighter morn and a happier land, which awaited him on the termination of his present sufferings. All the community were present on these occasions. For immediately the bell tolled with its peculiar solemnity—the notice of a soul in agony—all labour ceased, and the brethren hastened to the dormitory, where they found their departing brother, stretched on the floor upon a little straw in the form of a cross, and sprinkled with ashes. They forthwith commenced to recommend his soul to God, by penitential Psalms and Litanies. Thus the graves in the church-yard silently multiplied; the stalls in the church, one after another, became vacant, and no postulants presented themselves at

the gate of the monastery and implored admittance. From thirty to thirty-five, the number had gradually diminished to seventeen or eighteen.

The only consolation for the holy abbot, was the chanting of the Divine Office. When entering the church for evening song, he was observed by a brother to press his fingers forcibly upon the latch of the door, as if he wished, to leave the impression of a seal. The brother venturing to ask what this meant, the holy father answered: "The thoughts with which I am occupied during the day, in the management of the monastery, I leave here; and bid them remain until I call for them to-morrow morning after Prime."

"However the abbot might manage to drive away distressing thoughts during the quiet hours of the night, while the monks were chaunting the office in the church, yet they recurred with tenfold force during the day, when all the cares of the house came upon him, and his spiritual children were dying about him. At times his faith all but failed him; it crossed his mind that the monks who scoffed at Citeaux, might after all be right. The Cistercian manner of life might be displeasing to God; and the frequent deaths of the brethren, and the barrenness of the monastery might be a punishment for their presumption in attempting to go beyond what God allowed..... .He might, therefore, have been leading his poor brethren into the wilderness, and have made them there perish with hunger, and their blood would be required at his hands. These melancholy thoughts tormented him, and at last they broke out into words, when, with the whole convent, he was summoned to attend the death-bed of another brother. All the brethren wondered, as he spoke the words, at the calm faith with which he pronounced them, notwithstanding the deep anxiety which they displayed. Thus, then, in the presence of all he addressed the dying man :

"Thou seest, dearest brother, in what great weariness and failing of heart we are, for we have done our best to enter upon the strait and narrow way, which our most Blessed Father, Benedict, has proposed in his rule, and yet we are not well assured whether this our way of life is pleasing to God; especially since by all the monks of our neighbourhood we have long been looked upon as devisers of novelty, and as men who kindle scandal and schism. But more than all, I have a most piercing grief which cuts me through to the heart like a spear, and that is, the fewness of our members; for one by one, and day after day, death comes in and hurries us away.....Wherefore, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by virtue of thine obedience, I command thee, at whatever time, and in whatever way the grace of our Lord may determine, that thou return to us, and give us information touching this our state, as far as His mercy will allow." He spoke these words with a quiet confidence which looked beyond the grave, so that he appalled the brethren; but the dying monk, with a bright smile lighting upon his features said: "I will cheerfully do what you command, if by the help of your prayers I am so permitted." The result of this strange dialogue, held on the confines of life and death, was not long in appearing. The brother died, and a few days after he had passed away, the abbot was in the fields working with his brethren. At the usual time he gave the signal for rest, and they laid aside their labour for a while. He himself withdrew a little, and with his head buried in his cowl, sat down to pray. As he was in this position, lo! the departed monk appeared before him, surrounded by a blaze of glory, rather buoyed up in the air than standing on the ground. Stephen asked if it were well with him. He answered; "Well, good father abbot, I now bring you the information which you desired; and I am happy to say that your life and conversation is pleasing to God. He will send you a numerous

offspring; who, like bees swarming, will fly away and spread themselves through many parts of the world." At this joyful intelligence St. Stephen sat wrapt in admiration, until the brother recalled his attention by asking for his benediction. "What," exclaimed the abbot, "do you who have passed from corruption to incorruption—from darkness to light—from death to life, ask a benediction from me, who am still groaning under these miseries?" But the brother still persisted; "for the Lord," he said, 'hath given to you the power of blessing; He hath placed you on a pinnacle of dignity and spiritual rule. By your healthful doctrine I have escaped the stains of the world. It befits me, therefore, to receive your blessing." St. Stephen, though filled with confusion, dared not refuse, and the happy soul received his benediction and immediately disappeared, leaving the holy abbot in a transport of wonder and gratitude.

NOTE.—Vide Le Nain's History of Citeaux, vol. I. Life of St. Stephen, and the Fasciculus of Henriquez.

CHAPTER V.

THE ARRIVAL OF ST. BERNARD AND HIS COMPANIONS AT CITEAUX. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FILIATIONS. THE FIRST GENERAL CHAPTER. THE SECOND GENERAL CHAPTER. THE CHART OF CHARITY. CONFIRMED BY POPE CALIXTUS II. THE LITTLE EXORDIUM, AND THE USAGES OF CITEAUX. ST. STEPHEN'S RESIGNATION AND DEATH.

A SHORT period after the vision, with which we concluded the last chapter, in the year A. D. 1113, and the fifteenth from the foundation of Citeaux, whilst Stephen and the remnant of his little flock were pouring out the warm effusions of their hearts to God, and imploring the fulfilment of his promises, a band of thirty persons, under the guidance of a young man, were slowly traversing the forest and directing their steps to the abbey gate. The bell of the porter announced the arrival of strangers. Thirty persons entered, prostrated themselves at the feet of Stephen, and begged to be admitted into the number of his novices. "There were amongst them men of middle age, who had shone in the councils of princes, and who had hitherto worn nothing less than the furred mantle or the steel hauberk, which they now came to exchange for the poor cowl of St. Benedict; but the greater part were young men of noble features and deportment, and well might they, for they were of the noblest houses in Burgundy. The whole troop was led by one young man of about twenty-three years of age, and of exceeding beauty. He was rather tall in stature; his neck was long and delicate, and his whole frame very thin, like that of a

man in weak health! His hair was of a light colour, and his complexion was fair; but with all its paleness, there was a virgin bloom spread over the thin skin of his cheek; an angelic purity and a dove-like simplicity shone forth in his eyes, which showed at once the serene chasteness of his soul. This young man was he who was afterwards St. Bernard, and who now came to be the disciple of St. Stephen, bringing with him four brothers and a number of young noblemen, to fill the empty cells of the novices of Citeaux." [Cistercian Saints, Chap. XIII.]

All immediately commenced their noviceship but two;—the sweet and amiable nephew of Bernard,—Robert who was yet too young; and another who, terrified by the austerity of life which he beheld at Citeaux, returned to the world. "Now, it may be asked, that Stephen has housed his thirty novices, what has he or any one else gained by it? what equivalent is gained for all these domestic ties rudely rent, for all these bleeding hearts torn asunder, and carrying their wounds unhealed, into the cloister? would not rustics suit Stephen's purpose as well, if he would cultivate a marsh in an old wood, without desolating the hearths of the noblest houses in Burgundy? Human feeling revolts when high nobles with their steel helmets, shining hauberks, and painted surcoats, are levelled with the commonest tillers of the soil.....There are here no painted windows and golden candlesticks, with chasubles of white and gold to help out the illusion; feelings, imagination, all are shocked alike, and every faculty of the natural man is jarred at once at the thought. Such words might have been spoken even in Stephen's time, but 'wisdom is justified of her children.' One word suffices to silence these murmurs; *Ecce Homo*, Behold the Man. The wonders of the incarnation are an answer to all cavils. Why, it may as well be asked, did our blessed Lord choose to be a poor man, instead of being clothed in purple and fine linen? why was his mother a poor

virgin? why was he born in a stable, and laid in a manger? why did He leave His blessed mother, and almost repulse her, when she would speak to Him? why was that mother's soul pierced with agony at the sufferings of her divine Son? why, when one drop of His precious blood would have healed the whole creation, did He pour it all out for us? in a word, why, when He might have died (if it be not wrong to say so,) what the world calls a glorious death, did He choose out the most shameful, besides heaping to Himself every form of insult, and pain of body and soul? He did all this to show us, that suffering was now to be the natural state of the new man, just as pleasure is the natural state of the old. Suffering and humiliation are the proper weapons of the Christian, precisely in the same way. But independence, unbounded dominion and power are the instruments of the greatness of the world.....Let it be also remembered that persons leave their parents for causes which do not involve religion at all, as to follow some profession in a distant quarter of the globe, or to marry; and we may surely excuse St. Bernard and his brothers for conduct which was so amply justified by the event. One word more; every one will allow, that he who is continually meditating on heaven and heavenly things, and ever has his conversation in heaven, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, is more perfect than he who always thinks on worldly affairs. Let no one say that this perfection is ideal, for it is a mere fact that it has been attained. Stephen and Bernard, and ten thousand other saints have won this perfection. They knew that blessing: 'Verily, I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundred-fold, now in this time, and in the world to come, eternal life.'.....Let any one read St. Bernard's sermons on the Song of Solomon, and he will not doubt that

monks have joys of their own, which none but those who have felt them can comprehend." [Cist. Saints, Ch. XIII. [See Appendix, Note H.]

St. Stephen's love of poverty became now conspicuous, and the object of admiration since God had blessed him with such a disciple as St. Bernard, and clothed so many noblemen in the coarse garb of Citeaux. That which a short time previously had excited the sarcasm of neighbouring monasteries, now produced a movement which vibrated through Christendom, and opposed a powerful banner to the encroachments of luxury and the degeneracy of the age.

St. Bernard and his companions entered their novitiate with an ardent and determined spirit. "Bernard, Bernard, upon what errand art thou come here?" was an expression frequently in the mouth of him who excited so much emulation in the breasts of others. The long desired day of profession came in April, A. D. 1114, and St. Bernard and his kindred pronounced their solemn vows, and offered themselves to God without reserve, as victims of expiation, desirous of immolating themselves every-day to the service and glory of Jesus Christ. The example of St. Bernard drew crowds of postulants to Citeaux; and the holy abbot was soon obliged to commence the establishment of filiations. The vine which God had blessed began to fructify, and spread out its branches far and wide, and grow up into a fair and goodly tree. The first colony from the mother house St. Stephen planted upon the bank of the river Grône, near to the forest of Bragne, in the diocess of Châlons; and he called it by the symbolical name of La Ferté, or in Latin Firmitas, to signify the strength and consistency which the Almighty had already bestowed upon the rising Order. This was in the year A. D. 1113. "Indeed this Order had soon the choice of all the fair fields of France, and by-and-bye of Europe, at its command. In 1114, Hugh, once Lord of Mâcon,

St. Bernard's friend, was sent to Pontigny with another colony of monks from Citeaux. In 1115, Morimond and Clairvaux were founded. And who was to be Abbot of Clairvaux? Surely some brother of mature age, and of tough sinews, and hardy frame, for the other three abbeys were founded by special invitation of some bishop, nobleman, or other holy person; but the colony which peopled Clairvaux, set out like knight-errants on an adventure, not knowing whither they went. Yet to the surprise of all, Stephen fixes on St. Bernard, though he was hardly out of his novitiate, and was just twenty-five years of age; and though his weak frame was but ill able to bear the exercises of Citeaux, far less apparently to set out on a voyage of discovery, to find out the most lonely forest, vale, or mountain side, that the diocess of Langres could produce. Twelve monks were sent with this youthful abbot, to represent the twelve Apostles; he himself was to be to them in the place of Christ. The usual form with which such an expedition set out was characteristic. Stephen delivered to him who was to be the new abbot, a crucifix in the church of Citeaux, and then in perfect silence he set out, his twelve monks following him through the cloister. The abbey-gates opened and closed upon them, and the great world which they had not seen for many a day, lay before them. Forward they went, over hill and down dale, St. Bernard going first with the holy rood, and the twelve following, till they came to a deep glen between two mountains, whose sides were clothed with a forest of oaks, beeches, and limes; between them flowed the clear waters of the river Aube. The place was called (from some unknown reason,) the Valley of Wormwood, and had been the haunt of robbers. In St. Bernard's hands it became Clairvaux, or the Vale of Glory. Here, then, with the assistance of the peasants round, they established themselves, and Stephen soon had

the consolation to hear, that the daughter of Citeaux was rivalling her mother." [Ibid. Chap. XVII.]

We would gladly have sketched the memorable life of the last of the Fathers, as St. Bernard is termed, if our limits would have permitted. But we must refrain, and take our farewell of him, with these eulogiums pronounced by Alexander III, in the letters of the Canonization of our Saint, and by Balmez :—"Blessed Bernard," says his Holiness, "endowed with the prerogative of singular grace, not only shed from his own person the lustre of eminent sanctity, but diffused through the whole church of God the light of faith and morality. What country in Christendom is ignorant of the fruits which he brought forth in the House of the Lord, by his preaching and example ? Did he not extend to distant and barbarous nations the precepts of religion, and everywhere establish monasteries, the sacred asylums of peace? Did he not convert from the evil of their ways innumerable grievous sinners ? But more especially, did he not support the holy Roman Church over which we preside, amidst the storms of a long persecution by his ardent zeal, illustrious reputation, and profound wisdom ? Hence we are bound by peculiar obligations to venerate his memory, we feel confident, likewise, that through bodily affliction, by which he was crucified to the world, and the world to him, he has reaped the reward of a long and painful martyrdom."

"It is impossible to find a more sublime personification of the Church," observes Balmez, "combating against the heretics of his time, than the illustrious Abbot of Clairvaux, contending against all innovators, and speaking, if we may use the term, in the name of the Catholic faith. No one could more worthily represent the ideas and sentiments which the Church endeavoured to diffuse among mankind, nor more faithfully delineate the course through which Catholicism would have led the human mind. Let us pause a moment in the presence of this gigantic mind,

which attained to an eminence far beyond any of its contemporaries. This extraordinary man fills the world with his name,—upheaves it by his word,—sways it by his influence; in the midst of darkness he is its light; he forms, as it were, a mysterious link, connecting the two epochs of St. Jerome and St. Augustine, of Bossuet and Bourdaloue. In the midst of a general relaxation and corruption of morals, by the strictest observances and the most perfect purity, he is proof against every assault. Ignorance prevails throughout all classes; he studies night and day to enlighten his mind. A false and counterfeit erudition usurps the place of true knowledge; he knows its unsoundness, disdains and despises it; and his eagle eye discovers at a glance, that the star of truth moves at an immense distance from this false reflection, from this crude mass of subtilties and follies, which the men of his time termed philosophy. If at that period there existed any useful learning, it was to be sought in the Bible, and in the writings of the Holy Fathers: to the study of these, therefore, St. Bernard devotes himself unremittingly. Far from consulting the vain babblers who are arguing and declaring in the schools, St. Bernard seeks his inspirations in the silence of the cloister, or in the august sanctuary of the temple; if he goes out, it is to contemplate the great book of nature, to study eternal truths in the solitude of the desert, and, as he himself has expressed it, 'in forests of beech trees.'"

"Thus did this great man, rising superior to the prejudices of his time, avoid the evil produced in his contemporaries by the method then prevailing. By this method the imagination and the feelings were stifled; the judgment warped; the intellect sharpened to excess; and learning converted into a labyrinth of confusion. Read the works of the sainted Abbot of Clairvaux, and you will find that all his faculties go, as it were, hand in hand. If you look for imagination, you will find the finest

colouring, faithful portraits, and splendid descriptions. If you want feeling, you will learn how skilfully he finds his way into the heart, captivates, subdues, and fashions it to his will. Now he strikes a salutary fear into the hardened sinner, tracing with great force the formidable picture of the Divine Justice and the eternal vengeance; then he consoles and sustains the man who is sinking under worldly adversity, the assaults of his passions, the recollections of his transgressions, or an exaggerated fear of the divine justice. Do you want pathos? Listen to his colloquies with Jesus and Mary; hear him speaking of the Blessed Virgin with such enrapturing sweetness, that he seems to exhaust all the epithets that the liveliest hope, and the most pure and tender love can suggest. Would you have rigour and vehemence of style, and that irresistible torrent of eloquence, which carries the mind beyond itself, fires it with enthusiasm, compels it to enter upon the most arduous paths, and to undertake the most heroic enterprises? See him with his burning words inflaming the zeal of the people, nobles and kings; moving them to quit their homes, to take up arms, and pour into Asia to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre. This extraordinary man is everywhere met with, everywhere heard. Entirely free from ambition, he possesses, nevertheless, a leading influence in the great affairs of Europe; though fond of solitude and retirement, he is continually obliged to quit the obscurity of the cloister to assist in the councils of kings and popes. He never flatters, never betrays the truth, never dissembles the sacred ardour which burns within his breast; and yet he is everywhere listened to with profound respect; his stern voice is heard in the cottages of the poor, and in the palaces of kings; he admonishes with terrible severity the most obscure monk, and the Sovereign Pontiff.

"In the midst of so much ardour and activity, his mind loses none of its clearness or precision. His exposition of

a point of doctrine is remarkable for ease and lucidity; his demonstrations are vigorous and conclusive; his reasoning is conducted with a force of logic that presses close upon his adversary, and leaves him no means of escape; in defence, his quickness and address are surprising. In his answers he is clear and precise; in repartee, quick and penetrating; and without dealing in the subtleties of the schools, he displays wonderful tact in disentangling truth from error, sound reason from artifice and fraud. Here is a man formed entirely and exclusively under the influence of Catholicism; a man who never strayed from the pale of the Church, who never dreamed of setting his intellect free from the yoke of authority; and yet he rises like a mighty pyramid above all the men of his time." [Protestantism and Catholicity compared in their effects on the civilization of Europe, by the Rev. J. Balmez, Chap. LXX. p. 346.]

St. Bernard founded before his death in the year A. D. 1153, one hundred and sixty monasteries, filiations from Clairvaux. [Jerome Platus, the Jesuit. Lib. 2, de Bono Statûs Religiosi, Cap. XXII.]

The training of St. Bernard was the culminating point of St. Stephen's life. "Henceforth the materials of his history become scanty, for he appears only the administrator of his order, the history of which is merged in St. Bernard. He had passed the great trials of his life, and he now lived in comparative peace, founding new abbeys every year, and quietly watching the growth of the mighty tree, into which his grain of mustard seed had grown. Doubtless he who had so often tried to hide his head in the depths of a forest, did not now regret that his light had waned before his illustrious disciple. And let no one suppose that he is doing nothing, because his name occurs but seldom; every new monastery founded year by year is his work, and he is gradually becoming the head of a vast federacy, of which he is the legislator, as

well as abbot of his own convent of Citeaux. While St. Bernard is astonishing the world by his supernatural power over the minds of men, every now and then, Citeaux, the central point in which these vast rays of glory converge, from some new act of monastic policy issues, which is owing to its abbot." [Ibid. Chap. XVI.]

"These four abbeys, La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Morimond, were the heads of what were afterwards called the four filiations of Citeaux." They were the four columns upon which the whole Order rested in perfect compactness and security. They were the four rivers of paradise, which being divided into numerous channels, sent their crystal waters into almost every part of the Christian world.

St. Stephen, following the advice of St. Basil, ordained "that every year, all the abbots of monasteries descended from Citeaux were to meet there on Holy Cross day, to confer on the affairs of the Order; and their first meeting took place in the year 1116. Though only four abbots were present at this assembly, it is an important event in the history, not only of the Cistercian, but of every other order. In the institution of the general chapter, Stephen had devised an expedient, which went far to remedy the great defect of the early monasteries—the want of a proper jurisdiction. His idea was as yet imperfectly developed; it was but the first germ of the government which was to bind the Cistercian Order together: but it was a hint by which all Christendom profited; for so beneficially was it found to work, that Cluniacs, Dominicans, Franciscans, and the various congregations of the Benedictine Orders adopted it. Innocent III. seems to have been struck with the profound wisdom of Stephen's plan; for, in the celebrated fourth Lateran Council, where he presided, it was the system brought in to revive the monastic discipline, which in many places had been ruined;

and the general chapters of Citeaux are expressly taken as a model."—[Ibidem, ch. xvii.]

In 1119, St. Stephen held his second general chapter. Nine abbeys had already sprung from Citeaux in the space of five years; and it became needful to provide a constitution for the rising Order. "With the assistance of the Holy Spirit," says the Exordium, "our holy father composed certain statutes, to which he gave the name of the Chart of Charity; because they were intended to unite all the monasteries of the Order, wherever situated, by the bonds of a true and sincere charity, and cement them into one family, and therefore related to each other as by the ties of blood. Citeaux is the common ancestor of the whole, and the four first abbeys founded from it, La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Morimond as its four eldest daughters, respectively governed the abbeys sprung from them. The abbot of Citeaux was called Pater universalis ordinis; he visited any monastery that he pleased, and wherever he went the abbot gave up his place to him. On the other hand, the abbots of the four filiations, as they were termed, visited Citeaux, besides which, each abbot went every year to inspect the abbeys which had sprung from his own. Every year a general chapter was held at Citeaux, which all the abbots of the Order, without exception, were obliged to attend under heavy penalties. The chief abbot of each filiation could, with the advice of other abbots, depose any of his subordinate abbots, who, after admonition, continued to violate the rule; and even the head of the whole Order might be deposed by the four abbots, though not without a general chapter, or in case of urgent necessity, in an assembly of abbots of the filiation of Citeaux. Each abbey was to receive with joy, any of the brethren of other Cistercian abbeys, and to treat him as though he were at home. Thus the most perfect union was to be preserved amongst the whole body; and if any discord arose in the general chapter, the

abbot of Citeaux might, with the help of other abbots, called in by himself, settle the question in dispute."—[Ibid.] Vide a copy of the Chart of Charity, at the end of the Appendices.

Pope Calixtus II. gave his solemn approbation to this body of laws, under its appropriate name of Chart of Charity. This Pope, when legate in France, and Archbishop of Vienne, paid a visit to Citeaux, and cemented with the abbot a pious and lasting friendship. At his death 1124, he ordered his heart to be carried to Citeaux, and put into the hands of St. Stephen. It was placed behind the high altar in the old church.

St. Stephen now ordered a collection of sacred ceremonies and usages to be drawn up, under the name of the usages of Citeaux, and which are in full observance in the Cistercian monasteries of strict rule, at the present day. He likewise directed a short history, detailing the commencement of the Order, to be written; and which is called the Exordium Parvum, or the Humble Origin of Citeaux. "The long and laborious life of St. Stephen is now drawing to a close.....No data are given in his history to ascertain his age; so that his years go on silently, numbered by those of Citeaux, and it seems strange that all at once, when his Order is in the height of prosperity. his life, which was the moving principle of the whole, should come to an end. Yet so it is even with the greatest Saints; man goes to his labour until evening, and then leaves it unfinished, and goes home to rest in the grave. At the chapter of 1133, the year after the privilege was granted to the Cistercians by Innocent, "When," says the Exordium, "our blessed father, Stephen, had stoutly administered the office committed to him, according to the true rule of humility given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was worn out with old age, and his eyes were blind, so that he could not see, he laid aside his pastoral charge, wishing to think in peace on God, and on

himself, through the sweet taste of holy contemplation." Before, however, his soul was freed from its earthly tabernacle, Stephen had still a trial to undergo; God willed that His Saint should die with his arms in his hands. The electors to whose task it fell to choose a successor, on Stephen's resignation, pitched upon a man who was utterly unworthy to succeed him. Wido, or Guy, abbot of Three Fountains, had by some means deceived men into an opinion of his sanctity, and though, as the Exordium calls him, he was but a whited sepulchre, the abbots selected him to govern the abbey and the whole order. Stephen knew what sort of man he was; it is said, that God specially revealed to him the wickedness of this new abbot.....Stephen however, remained still; he felt sure that God would not abandon the rising Order, and he did not choose to take upon him again a government which he had just laid down, by interfering with the free choice of the monks. With this dreadful secret on his mind, he held his peace. He had not long to wait, for "scarcely had a month passed away, when, by the revelation of the Lord, Guy's wickedness was laid bare, and this bastard plant, which the heavenly Father had not planted, was rooted out of Paradise." He was succeeded by Rainaldus, a monk of Clairvaux, and a man in whose hands Stephen rejoiced to leave his Order. His work was now done upon earth, and his strength was fast sinking; he did not live many months after Rainaldus was elected. It is not known whether his illness was short or lingering, but the Exordium gives the following account of the death-bed of the man of God. "As the time approached when the old man lying on his bed, was, after his labours were over, to be brought into the joy of the Lord, and from the lowest room of poverty, which he had chosen in the world, according to the counsel of our Saviour, was about to mount up to the banquet of the Father of the family on high; there met together, besides

others, certain brethren, abbots of his order, to accompany, by their most dutiful services and prayers, their faithful friend and most lowly Father, thus on his way to his home. And when he was in his last agony and was near death, the brethren began to talk together and call him blessed: being a man of such merit, they said that he could go securely to God, who had in his time brought so much fruit to the church of God. He heard this, and gathering together his breath as he could, said with a half-reproachful voice, What is it you are saying? Verily, I say to you, that I am going to God as trembling and anxious as if I had never done any good. For if there has been any good in me, and if any fruit has come forth through my littleness, it was through the help of the grace of God, and I fear and tremble much, lest perchance I have kept that grace less worthily and less humbly than I ought. Beneath this shield of the perfect lowliness which sounded on his lips, and grew deep in his heart, he put off the old man, and putting aside in his might, all the most wicked darts of the enemy, fiery and sulphureous though they were, he passed with ease the airy region of storms, and mounted up and was crowned at the gate of Paradise." It was on the 28th of March, 1134, that Stephen quitted this weary life, to join St. Robert and St. Alberic, whom he had so long survived. Before he died he had founded twenty monasteries of the line of Citeaux; the number of houses of the whole Order was upwards of ninety.

[Note, Alban Butler, says, that Stephen himself founded thirteen abbeys, and lived to see above a hundred founded by monks of his Order, under his direction.]

His Order seems to have thriven in Stephen's native air; most of our great abbeys, Tintern, Rievaux, Fountains, Furness, and Netley, which are now known by their

beautiful ruins, were Cistercian.* "The Order took to itself all the quiet nooks, valleys, and all the pleasant streams of Old England, and gladdened the soul of the labourer by its constant bells. Its agricultural character was peculiarly suited to the country, though it took its birth beyond the seas. Doubtless St. Stephen, when he was working under the hot sun of France, often thought of the harvest moon and the ripe corn-fields of his native land. May his prayers now be heard before the throne of grace, for that dear country now lying under the wrath of God, for the sins of its children." [Ibidem, Chap. XX.]

* Tintern, Rievaux, Fountains, Furness, with Waverley, Bildewas, and Garendon were established before St. Stephen's death. Waverley in Surrey was the first established in England, (1128). Furness was not Cistercian till 1148.

[See Appendix, L.]

CHAPTER VI.

RELIGIOUS ORDERS OF THE WEST BRANCHES OF THE BENEDICTINE FAMILY. NUMBER OF MONASTERIES. CLUNY. CITEAUX. A DAY AT CITEAUX. THE INFLUENCE OF CITEAUX. ITS PRIVILEGES, &c.

Religious Orders which succeed each other in the ever fertile field of the Church, are subject in the course of their development to the ordinary laws of nature. They spring up from a few small and almost imperceptible seeds, blossom, and bear fruit; they then droop, wither, and decay. But they leave behind them the fruit which contains the seed of a new germination; this in due course of time buds, and grows vigorously, and spreads through the usual process of ramification, and at length is consolidated into the trunk of many noble and far extended branches.

We behold the illustrious Order of St. Benedict, established on Mount Cassino in the sixth century, carrying on the work of propagation by successive transformations, even to the present day; casting off at each new phase, features which have become wrinkled and displeasing, to re-appear under other aspects more in accordance with the changes of times and manners. Even at the commencement of the eighteenth century, there were numbered more than thirty-seven thousand monasteries in the different filiations which acknowledged St. Benedict for their Patriarch. [Helyot, Hist. de l'Ordre of St. Bened.]

Indeed, his rule from the time of Charlemagne was generally adopted by the monks of the west. One of the

most memorable transformations of this memorable Order, was the reform of Cluny, in 910, under William the Pious. It continued about two-hundred years to be the centre of piety, science and virtue, in Europe. On the death of St. Hugh, it declined rapidly, and disappeared before a more illustrious development in the foundation of Citeaux. We have seen the humble origin of this Order, which became the most noble and most extensive branch of the great parent tree.* We have hastily glanced at the lives of the three Saints who gave it birth, watched its infancy, and brought it to perfection. It will no doubt, be pleasing to the pious reader, to see the manner of life which has obtained for these holy servants of God, so much justly merited praise and admiration. Indeed, our gratitude and esteem are deservedly due to the founders of religious houses, which contribute so much to the glory of Jesus Christ, the sanctification of his elect, and the edification of his Church ; which open cities of refuge whither the sinner may flee from the wrath to come, and where the just may find a secure retreat from the contagion of the world.

We will devote, therefore, a few pages to the practices of Citeaux, and examine in detail the life observed by its silent inmates. Lest our own words might be suspected of partiality, we will give the description in the simple and pleasing narrative of the author of the Cistercian Saints, who at the time he composed it, was a Protestant clergyman. We have both omitted and inserted trifling

* "It is not without a certain degree of pleasure," says Mabillon, "that I enter upon the Annals of the twelfth century, in which the new Congregation of Citeaux, together with Cluny, furnish abundant matter for our history.....In a short period the Cistercian family increased so wonderfully, that it became the largest congregation, the most noble portion, and the most extensive branch of the Benedictine Order, &c." See note at the end of the Introduction.

matters, when it seemed prudent to do so either for elucidation or brevity.

"Suppose the monks all lying on their beds of straw, ranged in order along the dormitory, the abbot in the midst. Each of them lay full dressed, with his cowl drawn over his head, with cuculla and tunic, and even with stockings on his feet. His scapular alone was dispensed with. Doubtless no one complained of heat, for the bed-clothes were scanty, consisting of a rough woollen cloth between their limbs and the straw mattress, and a sort of woollen rug over them. The long dormitory had no fire, and currents of air had full room to play under the unceiled roof, left in the native rudeness of its beams. A lamp lighted up the apartment, and burned all night long. At the proper hour the clock awoke the sacristan, who slept, not in the dormitory, but near the church. He was the time-keeper of the whole community, and regulated the clock, which seems to have been something of an alarum, for he used to set it at the right hour over night. His was an important charge, for he had to calculate the time, and if he was more wakeful than usual, or if his clock went wrong, the whole convent was robbed of a part of its scanty rest, and the last lesson had to be lengthened, that the hour of lauds might come right again. The hour of rising was two o'clock, during the ferial days of the week; one o'clock on Sundays and Feasts of the second rank; and twelve o'clock on Feasts of the first class. The sacristan, as soon as he was up, trimmed the church-lamp, and that of the dormitory, and rang the great bell; in a moment the whole of this little world was alive; the sole things which a minute ago looked as if they were watching, were the two solitary lamps burning all night-long, one in the dormitory, the other in the church, as if they were ready trimmed with oil for the coming of the Lord; but now every eye is awake, and every hand is making the sign of the cross.

Most men find it hard to leave even a bed of straw, and the seven hours in winter, and six in summer, were but just enough for bodies wearied out with hard work, and always hungering; doubtless the poor novice often stretched himself, before the tones of the bell which had broken his slumbers fully roused him to consciousness, but starting from bed, and putting himself at once into the presence of his Lord, was but the work of a moment for the older monk. One by one, these white figures glided along noiselessly through the cloister, keeping modestly close to the walls, and leaving the middle space free, where none but the abbot walked. Their cowls were drawn over their heads, which were slightly bent down; their eyes were fixed on the ground, and their hands hung down motionless by their sides, wrapt in the sleeves of the cuculla. The old Cistercian church was remarkable for its arrangement. It was intended for monks alone; few entered it but those guests who happened to come to the abbey, and they were not always allowed to be present. It was divided into four parts; at the upper end was the high altar, standing apart from the wall: the sole object which Cistercian simplicity allowed upon it was a crucifix of painted wood; and over it was suspended a pix, in which the Holy Sacrament was reserved, with great honour, in a linen cloth, with a lamp burning before it day and night. The Blessed Sacrament is now preserved in a tabernacle, which remains permanently upon the altar, according to the present rites and customs of the Universal Church. The part in front of this most sacred place was called the presbyterium, and there the priest, deacon, and sub-deacon, sat on chairs placed for them when the holy sacrifice was to be celebrated. Next came the choir itself, where the brethren sat in simple stalls, ranged on each side of the church. In front of the stalls of the monks were the novices, kneeling on the pavement, and sitting on low seats. The stall of the

abbot was on the right hand, in the lower part of the choir, and the prior's place was on the opposite side. Beyond this was the retro-chorus, which was not the lady-chapel, but was at the other end of the church nearest the nave, and was the place marked for those in weak health, but still well enough to leave the infirmary. Last of all came the nave, which was smaller than the rest of the church, unlike the long and stately naves of our cathedral churches. Into this church, called by the modest name of oratory, the first Fathers of Citeaux entered nightly to sing the praises of God, and to pray for the world, which was lying asleep beyond the borders of their forest. It had many separate entrances, by which different portions of the convent flocked in with a quick step, to rouse themselves from sleep; but all in perfect silence. Each brother as he came in threw back his cowl, and bowed to each altar as he passed, and then to the high altar. They then, (except on Sundays and Feast days,) knelt in their stalls, with their hands clasped upon their breasts, and their feet close together, and said the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. In this position they remained until the commencement of the Deus in adjutorium, when they rose and remained standing during the rest of the service, except where it was otherwise especially marked. Matins lasted for about two hours, during which they chanted psalms, interspersed with anthems. The time for Matins and Lauds varies according to the nature of the Office, a Festival or Ferial-day. The night Office, including meditation and the Matins and Lauds of the Little-office of the Blessed Virgin, occupies on Feasts of the first-rank, four hours, from twelve o'clock till four o'clock in the morning; on Sundays and Feasts of the second-rank, three hours, from one o'clock to the same hour as above; on other days, from two hours to two hours and-a-half. The glimmering light of the lamp was not intended to do more than pierce through the gloom of the church, for the greater part of the

service was recited by heart, and a candle was placed just in that part where the lesson was to be read; if it were not that their lips moved, they might have been taken for so many white statues, for their arms were placed motionless upon their bosoms, in the form of a cross, and every movement was regulated so as to be as tranquil as possible. The sweet chanting of the early Cistercians struck some of their contemporaries, as something supernatural. 'With such solemnity and devotion do they celebrate the Divine Office,' says Stephen of Tournay, 'that you might fancy that angels' voices were heard in their concert; by their psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, they draw men to praise God, and they imitate the angels.' Yet this effect was simply produced by common Gregorian chants, sung in unison; as in other parts of Divine worship, the Cistercians were reformers in church music. Their chanting was especially suited for contemplation: they dwelt on each syllable, and sucked in the honied sense of the Psalms, as they pronounced the words. It is not wonderful if the men of that time believed that devils trembled, and angels noted down in letters of gold the words which dropped from their lips, as these grave and masculine voices chanted through the darkness of the night the triumph of good over evil, and the glories of the Lord and of His Church. Few, indeed, are worthy to chant the psalms: who can repeat, for instance, the 118th psalm as he should? But Stephen and his brethren might pronounce those burning words of the Spirit without shame, for they had indeed given up the world. 'Ignitum eloquium tuum vehementer, et servus dilexit illud.'

"After matins were over they never returned to sleep, but were permitted either to pray in the church, or to sit in the cloister. It was one of the rules of the Order that they were not to prostrate themselves full length on the ground, in the church, but should keep their souls in quiet before God, without violent action. Others again

remained in the cloister. But let no one think of the cloister as it is now, in a state of desertion, about our cathedrals, cold and comfortless, with all the glass taken out of its windows; its religious silence has given place to the silence of the churchyard. It was formerly the very paradise of the monk, from which all the rest of the convent was named; it shut him out from the world, with its royal rampart of discipline, and was an image of the rest of heaven. It was the passage by which every part of the convent buildings were connected, and around which on Palm Sunday, they walked in procession, with green palms in their hands. Processions around the cloisters took place on many Sundays and Festivals, during the course of the year. At the east end of the church, at right angles with it, was the dormitory; opposite the church was the refectory, and adjoining the church was the chapter-house; in the centre was a cross. After matins, then, those of the brethren who were not in the church were all together in the cloister. Before prime no one was allowed to speak unless there was some urgent necessity. After prime, in one part was the Cantor marking out the lessons, and hearing some brother repeat them in a low suppressed tone; or else a novice would be learning to recite the psalter by heart. In another part, ranged on seats, the brethren would sit in unbroken silence reading, with their cowls so disposed about their heads, that it might be seen that they were not asleep. It was here that St. Bernard gained his wonderful knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, meditating upon them before morning light. In another corner of the cloister, the boys of the monastery would be at school, under the master of novices. The library from which the monks took the books in which they read, was between the church and the chapter-house, and was under the care of the sacristan. Citeaux had its scriptorium as well as its library, where manuscripts were copied by the brethren.

It is true that the antiquary would despise the handiwork of the Cistercians, for no illuminated figures of saints, elaborate capital letters, or flowers in arabesque creeping up the margin, were allowed; jewelled covers and gold clasps were also forbidden; but instead of this, religious silence was strictly observed, and the scriptorium was a place for meditation as much as the cloister itself. Their labours did not consist in simply copying the manuscripts; they took pains to discover various readings, and to compare editions. It might have been supposed, that the cold winds of the forest, with the burning sun and the drenching rain, must have fairly bleached out of Stephen's mind all the learning which he had gathered in the schools of Paris. But he left behind him a work—the manuscript bible in four vols., which we have mentioned in his life,—which proved that he kept under his Cistercian habit, the same heart which had urged him to leave his old cloister of Sherbourne to study in Scotland and in France.

"After Prime, the religious walked in solemn procession into the chapter. If ever there was a scene revolting to human pride, it was the chapter; more than any other part of the monastic life, it shows that a convent was not a place where men walked about in clothes of a peculiar cut, and spent their time in formal actions, but a school of humiliations, where the very last roots of self-love were plucked up, and the charity of the gospel planted in its stead. Humility was the very soul of the cloister, and a great part of St. Benedict's rule is taken up with an analysis of the twelve degrees of humility, which form the steps of a Jacob's ladder, leading up to perfect love, which casteth out fear. Our Cistercians had studied this part of the rule well, and St. Bernard's earliest work, is a sort of comment upon it. The chapter house was the place where this mingled humility and love was most of all exercised. Around it were ranged seats, one above another; the novices sitting on the lowest row, or rather

on the footstools attached to the seats ; in the midst at the upper end, was the abbot's chair. The chapter opened with the martyrology, and with those parts of the service now attached to the office of prime, still, however, said in the chapter. Then followed a portion of St. Benedict's rule, with a commemoration of the faithful departed, and in some cases a sermon. When the rule had been explained, each brother who had in the slightest way transgressed the rule, came forward and confessed it aloud before the whole convent. He rose from his seat, threw back the hood of his cowl that all might see his face, and threw himself full length on the floor, without speaking a word. The abbot asked him : 'What sayest thou ?' The brother answered, 'Mea culpâ.' 'It was by my fault ;' then he was bidden to rise in the name of the Lord ; he confessed his faults, and after receiving a penance, if it were necessary, he went back to his seat at the bidding of his superior. When all had confessed their own sins, then a still more extraordinary scene followed : each monk accused his brother, if he had seen or heard anything amiss in him. He rose, and mentioning his name, said, 'Our dear brother has committed such a fault.' Happy they who could thus bear to hear their faults proclaimed in the face of day, without being angry. To prevent this it was customary for the accused to say for his accuser, a Pater Noster and Ave Maria. The angels are blessed because they cannot sin ; next to them in happiness are those, who are not wrathful when rebuked. At the conclusion of the chapter of faults, there was a second commemoration of the faithful departed. Then all marched to the dormitory to arrange their couches, change their night-dresses, that is their cowls and scapulars, and afterwards to wash at the lavatory. They went immediately to manual labour ; this was one of the peculiarities which distinguished Citeaux from Cluny. Their labour was good hard work by which they gained their livelihood,

and with the help of their lay brethren supported themselves, and gave abundant alms to the poor. Few things are more remarkable than this mixture of all the details of spades and forks, ploughing, hay-making, and reaping with the meditation and constant prayer of the Cistercians. During the harvest time, the daily mass was (if the abbot so willed,) attended only by the sick, and all who were too weak to work, for the whole convent was in the fields. And when mass was said, the priest put off chasuble and stole, and with his assistants followed the brethren who had gone before to work. St. Bernard put off the finishing of one of his wonderful sermons on the Canticles, because the brethren must go to the work, which their rule and their poverty required. It was a peculiarity of the Cistercians, that they did not sing psalms, but meditated while they worked; again no one was allowed to take a book with him into the fields. This last regulation was probably made by Stephen himself, for it is recorded of St. Alberic, that he took the psalter with him when he worked. Field-work was not, however, (it may be said by the way,) the only labour of the Cistercians; he took his turn to be cook, which office went the round of the convent, and was changed weekly. Again, he might be cellarer, infirmarian, master of the novices, or porter, with a variety of other offices, which would give him employment enough. But each servile occupation was hallowed by obedience and religious silence, in which the Lord spoke to the heart.

"The brethren left the fields as soon as the first stroke of the bell for tierce was heard. The early Benedictines said tierce in the fields, and continued working till near ten o'clock, thus giving two hours and-a-half to manual labour. The reason why the Cistercians worked for a shorter time was, because mass followed immediately upon tierce. In St. Benedict's time there was no daily mass, but since then a change had taken place in the discipline of the Church, and the holy sacrifice was offered up every

day at Citeaux. At this mass any one might communicate who had not communicated on the Sunday, which was the day on which the whole convent received the Body and Blood of our most blessed Lord, who was at that time given to the faithful under both kinds. After the celebration of these adorable mysteries, the brethren again retired into the cloister to read, or went into the church for meditation. From Easter to the fourteenth of September, the bell for sext rang about eleven, about half-past eleven the community assembled in the refectory, for the first and principal meal of the day. The Cistercian dinner needed the seasoning of early rising and hard labour to make it palatable. It consisted of a pound of the coarsest bread, one-third of which was reserved for supper, (except on fast days,) and two dishes of vegetables boiled without grease. Their drink was the sour wine of the country, well diluted with water, or else thin beer, or a decoction of herbs, called Sapa, (or Sisera,) which seems to have been more like vegetable soup, than any other beverage. Even fish and eggs, which had always been considered to be legitimate diet for monks, were excluded. Their contemporaries wondered at their austerities; how weak and delicate bodies, worn out by hard labour and by night watching, could possibly subsist on such coarse food: but St. Bernard tells us what made it palatable. 'Thou fearest watchings, fasts and manual labour,' he says to a runaway Cistercian, 'but these are light to one who thinks on the eternal fire. The remembrance of the outer darkness takes away all horror from solitude. Think on the strict sifting of thine idle words which is to come, and then silence will not be very unpleasing. Place before thine eyes the everlasting weeping and gnashing of teeth, and the mat or the down pillows will be the same to thee.' And yet theirs was not a service of gloom or fear. Christ rewarded the holy boldness of these noble athletes, who thus afflicted their bodies for His sake, by filling their

souls with the joys of devotion. 'Oh! that by God's mercy,' says St. Bernard, to one whom he was persuading to quit the world, 'I could have thee as my fellow in that school where Jesus is the master! Oh! that I could place thy bosom, if it were but once pure, in the place where it might be a vase to catch that unction, which teacheth us of all things. Thinkest thou not, that thou wouldst suck honey from the rock, and oil from the rugged stone?' Every action was sanctified to the monks, even at their meals a strict silence was observed, and one of the brethren read aloud some religious book, during the time that they were in the refectory. After dinner in the summer season, followed the meridian or an hour's sleep, to supply for the shortness of the night. The bell awoke them from this mid-day rest, and summoned them at half-past one to none. At two, the community returned to manual labour, which continued till half-past four. At five they sang vespers. The vesper-hour was especially the monk's season of quiet, when the day was over with all its work, and the shades of evening were closing about him. After vespers they partook of the evening collation, consisting of the remainder of their pound of bread, with a few raw fruits, such as radishes, lettuces, or apples furnished by the abbey garden.

"Before we close the day with compline, it will be necessary to mark the difference between the summer and winter rule. Their seasons followed the ecclesiastical division of the year; summer was reckoned from Easter to the middle of September, and the rest of the year was called winter. The Church in winter sits in expectation of her Lord's coming, and the Cistercians redoubled their austerities during this long period of the gloom of the year. They arose in all the cold and snow of winter, in the dark and dreary night, to watch for the coming of the Lord, and to pray for the world which was lying without in the darkness and shadow of death. As the world is

engaged in turning day into night, in order to have its fill of pleasure, so they multiplied time for devotion, by stealing from the hours when men were asleep. In winter none was at two p.m., and dinner at half-past two. This was the only meal in the twenty-four hours. After dinner, they walked into church two-and-two, chaunting the 'Miserere,' and there finished grace. At a quarter-past four commenced vespers. There was then another interval of quiet reading in the cloister. During Lent the one meal was postponed till after vespers, which concluded about twenty minutes past four. No fruit was allowed during Lent, except on Sundays. An hour extra was appointed for spiritual reading and meditation, during this holy season. Each brother received from the abbot a book which he was taught to regard as a present from heaven, and to read and ponder it carefully. The Holy Scriptures were particularly recommended. Any one was permitted to spend the whole hour in reading them if he pleased. No greater proof of their austere penitence in the time of Lent can be found, than the way in which St. Bernard speaks of it. Sweetly, and with the tenderness of a mother, does he always speak to the brethren at that time. 'Not without a great touch of pity, brethren,' he once said, 'do I look upon you. I cast about for some alleviation to give you, and bodily alleviation comes before my mind; but if your penance be lightened by a cruel pity, then is your crown by degrees stripped of its gems. What can I do? ye are killed all day long with many fasts, in labours oft, in watchings over much, besides your inward trials, the contrition of heart, and a multitude of temptations. Yea, ye are killed; but it is for His sake who died for you. But if your tribulation abounds for Him, your consolation shall abound through Him. For is it not certain, that your sufferings are above human strength, beyond nature, against habit? Another then doth bear

them for you, even He doubtless, who, as saith the Apostle, 'beareth up all things by the word of His power.'

Two things alone remain to be noticed, which, throughout the whole year, were the last events of a Cistercian day, and those are the collation or the reading of the collations of cassian, and compline. At Citeaux these collations, which were a collection of the lives of the early monks, or else some of the books of saints' lives, were read aloud in the cloister. On the finishing of the reading, all turned their faces to the East, and the abbot said, "Our help is in the name of the Lord;" the community responded; "Who hath made both heaven and earth;" and then they proceeded into the church to sing compline, which was the last office of the day. Compline was at six o'clock in the evening during the winter season, and at seven during the summer. After compline the abbot rose and sprinkled with holy water each brother as he went out in order. They then pulled their cowls over their heads and walked into the dormitory. After compline their was strict silence, unless in cases of urgent necessity; such as sickness, &c. How naked and dead are the words of a rule without the living abbot to dispense them, to couple together the strong and the weak, that the sturdy warrior might help on the trembling soldier, and to mingle the roughness of discipline with the tender hand which dropped oil and wine on the wounded heart, [ch. xv.]

Such was the Cistercian monk, pursuing the even tenor of his way; and reducing his whole life to the perfect maxims of the Gospel. He held no friendship with the world; for he renounced everything which it held in esteem, honours, riches, pleasures; he granted no indulgence to the passions, but tamed them by fasting, and brought them into subjection to the spirit by rigorous self-denial; he paid no court to pride, but made it bow down to the meanest occupation, and to the most painful

services. And yet the order that exacted this austerity of life from its members, increased with amazing rapidity; and battling with the corruption of the world, it conquered from this enemy of mankind, princes, prelates, and nobles; it softened down and humanized feudal manners, and exhibited a spectacle not frequently seen in this age—the nobleman a fellow labourer with the mechanic and the husbandman. "It became," says the venerable Peter of Cluny, "a second Esdras to re-establish the law of God, much forgotten at that period;—a new race of Machabees, who rebuilt God's temple, at that time in ruins—that is, the religious orders, the manners of which had fallen into sad decay."

Innocent III., in the year 1200, wrote to the abbot of Citeaux whilst assembled in general chapter, this flattering testimony of his esteem: "He who knows all things, even the secret emotions of the heart, knows with what affection I love you, and how I carry you in my bosom, with a charity the more lively as the fame of your holy institute is the more widely diffused; and what consolation we have in beholding you the odour of good example to those who love the name of God. You are always at the feet of our Lord, hearing with Mary His sweet words in a profound humility; and you assist by your fervent prayers those who are engaged in the cares of Martha. You ascend with Moses to the mountain's top, to beseech the Lord for us, who are united with Josue in combating the enemies of God's people. You afflict your bodies by continual watching, and mortify them by fasts which are seldom broken. You labour at the work of charity and are content with little, that you may the more abundantly assist the poor. You are indigent in all things that regard yourselves; but rich when you carry succour to others. You have nothing; yet you seem to possess all things. You lay up treasures in heaven, where neither rust consumeth, nor thieves break through and steal.

You esteem not this your abiding place; for, with the apostle, you look for a mansion not built with hands, but eternal in heaven."

To detail the encomiums pronounced upon the Order of Citeaux by supreme pontiffs and eminent ecclesiastical writers, would fatigue the reader, and be a repetition of much that has been already mentioned. It is termed the column upon which the Church rested securely during the stormy period of the twelfth century, when she was attacked in many quarters by heresy and sedition. It is designated the pure gold of the sanctuary,—the meek and humble dove of Christ—His chosen and spotless bride—the beautiful flower which has shed its fragrance upon every part of the world;—the fountain of Paradise, dividing its waters and fertilizing many lands,—and the bright morning star in the constellation of religious orders. It has received very many and very considerable privileges; and has been confirmed by more than a hundred papal Bulls, commencing with Pascal II., and reaching down to the present Pontiff, Pius IX. Numerous, too, were the favours conferred upon it by the Potentates of Europe. "Within fifty years after its institution, this order consisted of no less than five hundred abbeys; which number was increased to eighteen hundred soon after the year 1200. The sole monastery of Trebnitz in Silesia, reckons above forty princesses of Poland who have there professed this order. The noble military orders of Calatrava, Alcantara, and Montreza in Spain, and those of Christ and Avis in Portugal, are subject to it, and borrow from it their rules of piety.* The Knights Templar received their rules from St. Bernard. In no great length of time the Cistercian monasteries and convents swelled to the number of 10,000. Four thousand monasteries and six thousand convents.†

* Alban Butler's Life of St. Robert.

† Fasciculus Sanctorum Ordinis Cist. Liber 1. Distinct. 1.

Though it was the desire of the Cistercian monks to live and terminate their earthly pilgrimage unknown to the world; yet this favour was in many instances denied them. For first one eminent character and then another was selected to fill the chair of St. Peter, and rule the Universal Church, or to adorn the cardinalate, or to hold the archiepiscopal see, or to govern the single diocese. Other religious orders deemed it an honour to imitate its constitutions; and to allow, at the suggestion and wish of Innocent III., its abbots to preside at their general chapters. At its own general chapters the most distinguished persons oftentimes assisted,—bishops, archbishops and cardinals. Eugenius IV., who had been a Cistercian monk, and disciple of St. Bernard, presided over the general chapter of the year 1148. At the one of the year 1244, St. Louis King of France, with his court, was present; together with the Pope's nuncio, and the emperor's ambassador—kings, princes, and nobles, desired letters of fraternization and communication in prayer; so great was the confidence reposed in the prayers of these poor religious. In the year A. D., 1142, Alphonsus I. King of Portugal, made his kingdom tributary to Clairvaux, in fifty gold pieces yearly, worth about £270. In 1201, the Queen of Arragon devoted to this order her only son; and was allowed by a rescript from the Pope to enter the monastery of Populetum in Catalonia, on the day of his consecration. The sons, the brothers, the kindred of emperors, princes, and nobles, were sometimes found in the habit of simple convert brothers.

Saints were so numerous in these days of benediction, when Cistercian abbeys had still around them the halo of their first fervour, that in the general chapter of 1255, it was expressly forbidden to pursue the canonization of certain saints of the order, whose miracles at that time

p. 11. There the reader will find the authorities for this statement.

were shining with great lustre; and the reason for this prohibition is thus briefly stated: "Lest these solemn proclamations of sanctity, by their frequency, might diminish due respect towards holiness, and destroy that tone of fervour and generous emulation, so necessary for the support of the austere life of Citeaux." But that which redounds to the honour of this illustrious order more than the favours of the great, or the privileges graciously conferred by the Holy See, is the fact, that it continued without any relaxation of its discipline, to be the astonishment and edification of the world for more than two hundred years after its institution.*

* See Alban Butler's Life of St. Stephen. Le Nain's Life of St. Stephen. Henriquez's Menologium, and Fasciculus.

CHAPTER VII.

REFORMATIONS IN THE CISTERCIAN ORDER. IN SPAIN. IN FRANCE. IN ITALY. LA TRAPPE. ABBE RANCE. HIS EARLY YEARS. HIS CONVERSION. HIS REFORMATION OF LA TRAPPE. EDIFYING EXAMPLES. BOSSUET. KING JAMES II. DEATH OF ABBOT RANCE. STATE OF LA TRAPPE AT THE PERIOD OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

We will commence this chapter with the following observations of the celebrated Balmez: "We have already seen what is the real spirit of religious institutions; we have found their origin in the spirit of the Catholic religion; and history has told us, that they have arisen wherever she has been established. They have varied in form, in rule, in object, but the fact has always been the same. Thence we have inferred that wherever the Catholic faith shall be preserved, religious institutions will appear anew under some form or other. This prognostic may be made with complete certainty. We live in an age steeped in voluptuous materialism; gold and pleasure have acquired such an ascendancy, that we may, apparently, fear to see some societies lamentably retrograde towards the manners of paganism, towards that period of disgrace when religion might be summed up in the deification of matter. But in the midst of this afflicting picture, when the soul, full of anguish, feels itself on the point of swooning away, the observer sees that the soul of man is not yet dead, and that lofty ideas, noble and dignified feelings, are not entirely banished from the earth. The human mind feels itself too great to be limited to

wretched objects; to be tied down to the car of an air-baloon.....Even the present condition of society requires the existence of religious institutions.*

The order of Citeaux appears to have been happy in possessing within itself a power of reaction, by which, when disease and decay threatened no distant extinction, the vital principle was restored to its balance, and sound health gave a new existence to the feeble and declining constitution. By the force of this inherent power, but more, perhaps, through the powerful protection of the Queen of Heaven, its special patroness, there are at the present day, just 754 years since its commencement—in France, England, Ireland, Africa, and America, twelve monasteries and four convents, which profess and practise the primitive usages of Citeaux; besides more than ten which follow the mitigated rule of De Rancé. Thus is the youth of Citeaux renewed as that of the eagle. A beautiful image of this revival of the Cistercian institute, in its primitive strictness, is found in the 14th chapter of the Book of Job: "A tree hath hope; if it be cut, it groweth green again, and the boughs thereof sprout. If its root be old in the earth, and its stock be dead in the dust, at the scent of water it shall spring, and bring forth leaves as when it was first planted."

During many years various energetic struggles were made to destroy the canker-worm of relaxation which had eaten to the very core of the tree, and stripped Citeaux of its stately branches and fairest foliage, and produced signs of general decay; but they were only partially successful; and sometimes terminated in slips grafted upon the parent trunk—slips which in a short period became independent stocks, under distinct and specific names. They still, however, belonged to the Cistercian family,

* Protestantism and Catholicity compared in their effects on the civilization of Europe, by the Rev. J. Balmez. Written in Spanish, ch. xlvii.

though not subject to the jurisdiction of the mother house. In 1425 an independent congregation was formed in Castille. Martin De Vargas, a monk of the monastery, of St. Mary of the Rock, in Arragon, deploring the relaxation which had crept into monasteries, through the detestable practice of the appointment of abbots in commendam, resolved to employ his best exertions in the restoration of his own Order to its pristine splendour and simplicity. For this purpose he made a journey to Rome, obtained the sanction of the Sovereign Pontiff to his undertaking, and on his return to Spain, built the monastery of Mount Sion, near the city of Toledo, in 1425. Here he commenced with a few monks, a life of absolute poverty. Their cloathing was coarse;—their diet, the herbs of the fields; their silence continual; and prayer, their most frequent occupation. Under the protection of the kings of Castille, this reform soon spread into the neighbouring principalities.

John De la Barrière, a native of Quercy, whilst a student at Paris, formed a resolution to become a Cistercian monk, and reform the Order. After many tears and prayers poured forth in the Carthusian church at Paris, he went to the abbey of Notre Dâme des Feuillans, in the diocese of Rieux, in Aquitaine, of which when young, he had been made commendatory abbot, and took the religious habit in 1577, or according to Ludovicus, à Sancto Malachiâ in 1583. He carried his reform far beyond the strict Rule of St. Benedict. He ordained perpetual abstinence from flesh, eggs, fish, wine, oil, and salt; and appointed no other food but bread of the very coarsest description, and herbs frequently uncooked. The winter's fast was continued through the year, even on Sundays and on Christmas day. The solitary meal was eaten from the floor, without any table. No raiment was allowed but a single tunic, and the cowl for the church; stockings and sandals were in the list of prohibitions. The bed was

the bare ground. Clement VIII, in his bull of confirmation in 1595, mitigated these austerities. The abbot himself continued the practice of them to the day of his death. [Vide Henriquez, Menologium, p. 140, and Alban Butler's Life of St. Robert.]

Dom. Bernard of Mount Gaillard, an eminent theologian, and called the "Petit Feuillent," was highly esteemed for his virtues, and appointed by Duke Albert, at that time Governor of the Low Countries, abbot of Urvab, or Golden Valley, where he established the greater part of the above mentioned austerities. Henry III. of France, founded at Paris, the second convent, called St. Bernard's, in 1601. In 1605, "Doctor Asseline, famous at Paris, thirty-two years old, took the habit, with this motto:—

> 'Omnia nil sine Te, sine Te, Deus, omnia vana:
> Cuncta relinquenti sis mihi cuncta Deus.'

which he often had in his mouth. He took the name of F. Eustache de S. Paul. This reformation extended into Italy, under the name of the reformed Bernardines. The most pious and learned Cardinal John Bona, who died in 1674, was of this congregation." [Ibidem.]

But the most celebrated, if not the most extensive reformation of the Cistercian Order, was effected by John le Bouthillier de Rancé. He held the monastery of our Lady of La Trappe, in the Forest of Le Perche, and the diocese of Seez, in commendam. It is a fact worthy of remark, that the most austere reforms in the Cistercian Order, were commenced by persons, who, before their religious profession, had been abbots in commendam, that is, abbots enjoying the temporalities of monasteries, without entering into the monastic state, and consequently without the tie of religious vows; and perhaps without ever seeing the abbeys which they held under this profane tenure.

Many patrons committed the grievous abuse of presenting, at the death of the abbot of the monastery over which they claimed a right, the available income of such monastery to any favourite they pleased, whether a regular or merely secular person. A tide of evils rushed into the religious state through the flood-gates of this abuse; and the sanctity of the cloister soon became a by-word, a term of reproach. "In some monasteries lay abbots might be found quietly established with their wives and children; and the tramp of soldiers, the neighing of horses, and baying of hounds, made the cloister more like a knight's castle, than a place dedicated to God's service." [Cist. Saints, St. Stephen's Life; reference is made to Mabillon. Pref. in Sæc. 5.]

From the persons who enjoyed the advantages of the abuse, God was pleased to raise up champions who effectually suppressed it.

Armand Jean Bouthillier de Rancé, was born in 1626, of parents who held high rank among the nobility of France. His father was private secretary to Mary of Medici. The subject of our notice was called Armand Jean, after his godfather, Cardinal Richelieu. To the advantages of illustrious birth, were united very superior talents; so that from his infancy there was opened to him a golden prospect of honours, riches, and worldly pleasure. His father gave to him an education suitable to his abilities and expectations, and the best that Paris could afford. He had scarcely put off the dress of a child, when he was able to translate fluently the Greek and Latin poets. He published at thirteen years of age an edition of Anacreon, which he dedicated to Cardinal Richelieu. He next gave to the public a dissertation on the excellency of the human soul; in this learned refutation of the ancient philosophers, he established the immortal truth, so forcibly expressed by St. Augustine:—that the soul being created by God, could never find repose or happiness

save in God. To the astonishment of every one, he clothed his profound thoughts in a beautiful and energetic style of language. At the age of sixteen, he was deemed sufficiently learned in the writings of the Fathers, to be allowed by the archbishop, to preach in the principal parishes in the city of Paris. He shone with equal lustre in the university. In 1643 he maintained his Thesis of Philosophy; in 1647, he took the degree of bachelor in theology.

But the greatest triumph in his literary career, at this period, was his victory over Bossuet: in their contentions, for the degree of Doctor, Abbé Rancé held the first place; Bossuet, the second. They were about the same age; and they had both been distinguished by premature honours. They met in a combat of dialectics; they separated mutually attached in faithful friendship. De Rancé, was already Canon of Notre Dâme of Paris, commendatory abbot of La Trappe, Notre Dâme du Val, and St. Symphorian near Beauvais; and Prior of Chambor and of St. Clementine near Poictou. "A violation of propriety so outrageous was made the subject of remark; the clergy remonstrated, and the people were scandalized;" but no remedy was applied to the evil.

The young man himself was literally dazzled by the vista which opened to his view such bright realities. He participated in the admiration with which he was surrounded. He loved the glory of the world, and sought it with the ardour of a slavish votary. The seductions of the court captivated his imagination, and dragged him along with it in the chariot of dissipation. Made wealthy by the death of his father in 1650, he possessed a beautiful country mansion at Veretz, near Versailles. Here he believed himself at liberty to hold the position, which birth and talents gave him in the society of the great, and to equal, if not surpass his friends and admirers, in the splendour and decoration of his residence. The gardens and surrounding

lawns were laid out with exquisite taste, and every feature of the landscape was made to harmonize with the magnificence which pervaded the whole establishment. A succession of fêtes attacted from all quarters the gentry of the neighbourhood, and there were no entertainments like those of Abbé Rancé." The pleasures of the chase had peculiar attractions, and occupied much of his time.

Though engaged in the service of the church, he yet beheld in the different degrees of this holy career, merely steps to his temporal advantage. He received in 1651 the ordination of priesthood without any preparation, and the title of archdeacon of Tours, as the anticipated appointment to the archbishopric. In 1652 he was made doctor of Sorbonne, in reward for his theological defensions. He refused at this time, the bishopric of Léon, not from the motive of humility, but sheer contempt. He aspired to the archbishopric of Tours, at his uncle's death ; and therefore would not deign to look upon a small diocese far away from court, and not very wealthy.

His outward garb, at this period of life, is thus sketched by an eye witness :—"He wore a tight coat of beautiful violet coloured cloth. His hair hung in long curls down his back and shoulders. He wore two emeralds at the joining of his ruffles, and a large and rich diamond ring upon his finger. When indulging the pleasures of the chase in the country, he usually laid aside every mark of his profession ; wore a sword, and had two pistols in his holsters. His dress was fawn coloured, and he used to wear a black cravat embroidered with gold. In the more serious society which he was sometimes forced to meet, he thought himself very clerical indeed, when he put on a black velvet coat with buttons of gold."

[We borrow many of these interesting details, from an excellent article on Chauteaubriand's Life of De Rancé. No. xxxiv. Dec. 1844, Dublin Review.]

Amidst such a life as this, punctuality in his sacerdotal functions was entirely out of the question. He seldom said mass. But we will not follow the undignified ecclesiastic in the career of his dissipation and temporal emolument; but rejoice with the seraphim who looked down with much gladness from their starry thrones, upon this erring child of Adam, returning from the evil of his ways. The empty honours, the fleeting pleasures with which he was regaled, could not satiate his generous heart. "I have not found," he himself says, "in the world, that which I sought; I sigh for the repose which it cannot bestow."

During all the wanderings of his youth, the good natural qualities of his heart never abandoned him. From time to time, they struggled with considerable energy to lift him from the mire, and place him above the low and baneful atmosphere of earthly gratification. There still whispered, at solemn moments, when he was compelled to commune with himself and be still:—

> "the small voice within,
> Heard thro' gain's silence, and o'er glory's din."

He loved virtue passionately, and defended it against every foe; yea, by a noble contradiction even against himself. Though in possession of five ecclesiastical benefices, yet he sometimes denounced these pluralities with an energy which confounded their advocates, and threw his own soul into a state of salutary consternation. His natural integrity and greatness of soul disdained all baseness. Hence he manfully rejected every proposal, however favourable to his interests, which was inconsistent with honour and uprightness.

He was very compassionate to the poor, and never deemed it beneath him to do them a kindness or a service. The more he advanced in life, the less was he deceived by the false glare of human nothingness. He began to love and to desire the contentment enjoyed by the poor and

simple peasantry. Listen to his own affecting narrative of an event which opens to us his mind upon this subject. "I entered, one day, into conversation with a shepherd, who was tending his flock in the country, and who had retired to the shade of a large tree, from the rain of a passing storm. Beholding in him a mien which appeared to me extraordinary, he might be about sixty years of age, and a countenance through which smiled the peace and serenity of his soul, I asked him if he took pleasure in his daily occupation. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I find a profound quietness and consolation in watching and taking care of these harmless and innocent creatures; and no kings are so happy as I am.' I admired the simplicity of this rustic, and compared his contentment with the insatiable ambition of the rich. I learnt from him, that it is not the possession of the wealth of this world which constitutes our happiness; but innocency of manners, the moderation of our desires, submission to the divine will, and the love of that state in which God has been pleased to place us."

It is impossible to fix the period of Abbé de Rancé's conversion. It was not indeed a sudden stroke; but the result of a long combat between the grace of God and the weakness of man. In 1657, he began to think seriously of eternity. "Terrified at the judgments of God, his soul was at length humbled before Him, and he resolved to return to Him by a sincere repentance, knowing that a contrite and humble heart God will never despise. He had often preached that truth to others, but he never felt it himself till now; and it became in his breast an active element, which never lost its power or its activity, during the remaining portion of his life. 'Veretz,' says M. Chateaubriand, 'which was once so agreeable a residence, now became insupportable to De Rancé. Its magnificence was revolting to him. The furniture which everywhere sparkled with silver and gold; the gorgeous beds, where

even luxury, to use the words of a standard writer of the times, would have found itself too comfortable; the rooms hung with pictures of great price, the gardens exquisitely laid out, were too much for a man who looked at everything through a shower of tears. He resolved on a general reformation. For the former sumptuousness of his table, he substituted the strictest frugality. He dismissed the greater part of his servants, gave up hunting, and even drawing, an art of which he was passionately fond, was abandoned. Some maps and landscapes from his pencil have reached our times. Some friends who, like himself, had to weep over past excesses, joined him in his new mode of living, and in the practices of those austerities, of which he was subsequently to give so great an example. He seemed to be taking lessons, as it were, in the science of mortification, before he began to teach it seriously to others. A man struggling with himself, and seeking a victory over his passions, must ever be an object of interest to his fellow men. 'If I be not greatly mistaken,' he would say, 'in the spirit of the gospel, this house must be the house of a reprobate.' Having occasion shortly to go to Paris, he took up his abode in the convent of the Oratorians. It must have been a task of no ordinary difficulty to divest himself of the thoughts he had cherished so long. A famed anchoret of the early ages thought to get rid of them by fleeing to the sepulchres, but they followed even there; and St. Jerome, for a like intent, had recourse to unremitting labour, and carried heavy loads of sand up and down the beach of the Dead Sea, but, alas! he toiled and carried these loads in vain. I, too, have paced that beach myself, bearing my heavy load of care. Two emissaries of the evil one tried the virtue of De Rancé. They had not, indeed, they said, forms so fair and beautiful as she for whom he grieved,* but they

* Duchess of Montbazon. De Rancé returning one evening to the residence of the Duchess of Montbazon in a sad and thoughtful

would love him as truly and as well. He looked at his crucifix and fled. In doubt as to his future prospects, De Rancé consulted with his friends. Some recommended him to go to the foreign missions; to repair to the Indies or the frowning rocks of the Himalaya, and such a mission would have suited the stern and gloomy grandeur of his mind; but the vocation of De Rancé did not lead him there."

He himself knew not at that period the sublime state of perfection to which God had destined him; and when it was announced to him, he shrunk back appalled, for he had a great repugnance to the monastic state. The steps by which he was induced to surmount this repugnance are exceedingly interesting. He thought seriously of repairing the bad use which he and his family had made of church property, and of choosing a state of life which would be a continual expiation for the sins and wanderings of his youth; but as his mind, tossed about by various winds, remained in doubt and uncertainty, he determined upon a consultation with three bishops.

The advice which they gave him,—each one in progression recommending a greater severity than the preceding—furnished three steps by which God elevated him,

mood, found the door closed, and the house apparently deserted by all the inmates. Surprised and alarmed, he went round to a postern through which he had often got admittance, and tied his horse to a post. The servants knowing his attachment to their mistress, were unwilling to tell him what had taken place, and he ascended a small private stair that led to the apartments of the lady. On the top was a small chamber—half library, half dressing room—where she was wont to see her most friendly visitors, and where De Rancé now wished to give her an agreeable surprise. He tapped softly at the door, and hearing no sound, he opened it slowly and went in. She was there indeed, but—it was in her coffin. She had been carried away by the small pox after a short illness, and the horror of the dreadful contagion was such, that neither friend nor attendant would keep her company. Some authors give this sight as the commencement of De Rancé's conversion. Others omit it as entirely fabulous.

in defiance of all his previous opposition to an absolute abnegation of self. The bishop of Aleth counselled him to sell his patrimony, and distribute the price of it to the poor. But he allowed the Abbé to retain his benefices, which were deemed necessary for his honourable maintenance. De Rancé exclaimed at this proposal that it was impossible, that his family would not permit it, and he had not the courage to brave their anathema. He listened, however, with respect to the reasons of the prelate, and withdrew almost conquered. The bishop of Pamiers proceeded farther. He advised him not only to sell his patrimony, but to sacrifice to God his benefices, the plurality of which was a violation of the laws of the Church, and to keep one alone for his necessary support. Against this new exaction De Rancé warmly remonstrated. "What," said he, "after having given to the poor my patrimony, worth 100,000 crowns, must I reduce my benefices to one alone? How can I live according to my condition? I have five which produce me an income of 15,000 livres. But must I not travel to Paris in a carriage with a certain number of servants?" The bishop, nevertheless, spoke so well, and enforced so energetically the renouncement which he had recommended, that it appeared necessary to receive his decision as the sentence of the Holy Spirit. From Pamiers De Rancé went to visit his friend, the bishop of Comminges. "Your neighbours, my lord," he said to the bishop, "have stripped me—the one of my patrimony, the other of my benefices—with the exception of one." The bishop approved of their decision; and added, that as abbeys in commendam were contrary to the spirit of the Church, it was necessary he should take the monastic habit, rule over the monastery he was still to hold, and live in the penitential state of a monastic life. At this third blow the Abbé could no longer contain himself. "What," he cried out with indignation, "am I to put on the cowl? I have entertained all my life a mortal anti-

pathy to this state." The bishop was silent; but his words, though galling to the spirit, were not forgotten.

The sacrifice of the De Rancé was complete. He resigned all his benefices but the poorest, the most unhealthy, and the least known, the abbey of La Trappe, in the ancient province of Perche. This province is divided from Normandy by a range of hills which commence at Cherbourg, and, extending in a south-easterly direction, disappear near Châlons. This range of hills, for the most part of very moderate elevation, is intersected here and there by ravines and narrow valleys, and clothed in many places with dense masses of the ancient forests of the country.* In one of these ravines lay the monastery which has since acquired a more than European celebrity. The nearest towns were Seez and Mortagne, between which it was situated. The geographical distance was small, but for all the purposes of human communication, it was as far removed from the abodes of man, as if it were a hundred miles away. Nature had surrounded it with hills and woods, as if it were resolved to shut out all intercourse with the world that is beyond them; and the hardy traveller who succeeded in passing the barrier of rocky hills, was still debarred access to the convent walls by a chain of small lakes which encircled them like the moat of a castle, and could only be passed in safety under the direction of an experienced guide. A few fields of corn and some fruit trees were all that the most laborious industry could wrest from the stubborn soil. Such was the dreary loneliness of the place, that, save some stray sound from the monastery, nothing was ever heard but the rustling of the trees, the wild notes of the water fowl, and the rush of the water that fell from the surrounding hills. In the heat of the noon-day sun the venerable walls of the convent were seen distinctly from every point of the hills around,

* At least it was so two hundred years ago, though we believe there are few remains at present.

but in the morning and evening the eye would look for it in vain amid the thick mist that settled upon the valley. A dark grey tower would now and then raise its head through the mass of curling vapour, but at other times its existence and position could only be determined by the sound of the large bell that came booming up the mountain side at the stated hours of prayer. It was founded by Rotrou II., count of Perche, in the year 1122. Once on his way to England, he was in danger of being lost at sea. He made a vow that if ever he saw his native hills again, he would build a chapel to our Lady in gratitude for his deliverance. The storm ceased, and he returned in safety. The convent of La Trappe was the fulfilment of his vow. In token of the event he had the roof constructed to resemble the keel of a vessel turned upside down. It was a Benedictine convent—a filiation from Savigny—and joined together with the mother house, the flourishing Institute of Citeaux, in 1148. "One of its early abbots, of the name of Herbert, accompanied the crusades of 1212, and with Renald of Dampierre, and Simon of Montfort, was taken prisoner by the caliph of Aleppo. After a captivity of thirty years he returned to his own country, and founded Claretz, a dependency of La Trappe. The thirteenth abbot in regular succession died in 1526, and in 1527 Cardinal du Bellay received it 'in commendam' from Francis I. Thenceforward it continued to be so held, until the strict observance of the institute was restored by the subject of our notice in 1662.

"There are in existence," says Count Chateaubriand, "formal reports in writing of the lamentable condition of this monastery. That which bears the date of 1685, signed by Dominic, abbot of Val-Richer, describes the state it was in before the reform of De Rancé. Day and night the gates were open; males and females were indiscriminately admitted to the cloisters. The entrance hall

was so dark and filthy, that it was more like a prison than a house consecrated to God. Access was had to the several floors by a ladder placed against the walls, and the boards and joists of the floors were broken and worm-eaten in many places. The roof of the cloister had fallen in, so that the least shower of rain deluged the place with water. The very pillars that supported it were bent, and as for the parlour, it had for some time been used as a stable. The refectory was such only in name. The monks and their extern visitors played at nine pins or shuttlecock in it when the heat or inclemency of the weather prevented them from doing so outside. The dormitory was utterly deserted; it was tenanted at night only by birds; and the hail and the snow, the rain and the wind, passed in and out as they pleased. The brothers who should have occupied it, took up their quarters where they liked, and where they could. The church itself was not better attended to. The pavement was broken, and the stones thrown about. The very walls were crumbling to decay. The belfry threatened to come down every moment. It shook alarmingly at every ringing of the bell.

"When De Rancé set about reforming the monastery, it was but the ruin of a monastic establishment. The monks had dwindled down to seven. Even these were spoiled by alternations of want and plenty. When De Rancé first began to talk of reform, the whole establishment was in commotion. Nothing was heard but threats of vengeance. One spoke of assassinating him, another advised poison, while a third thought the best and safest way of getting rid of him, would be to throw him into one of the lakes that surrounded the monastery. A gentleman of the neighbourhood, apprehensive for his safety, proffered his assistance, but it was immediately declined. 'The apostles,' said the abbot, 'established the faith in defiance of earthly power, and that come what may, there was no happiness after all like that of suffering for the sake of

justice.' The abbot threatened to report their irregularities to the king, and the very dread of his authority, and the fear of his vengeance, had penetrated these remote localities. The monks consented at length, and unwillingly, to the changes proposed. A formal agreement was drawn up, which secured a pension of four hundred livres to each of the seven surviving members of the old community; and they were allowed the choice of living in the monastery according to the rule, or taking up their abode elsewhere. Shortly after, two religious of the abbey of Perseigne, at the request of De Rancé, came to take temporary possession of the monastery." De Rancé had here before him a striking specimen of the fruits produced by abbeys held in commendam. How many years had not he and his family been parties to this abuse! Better would it be to destroy a monastery, dismiss its inmates, and erase its walls, than deliver it over to the rapacity of the rich, in the way of commendam—thence to become the nest of wickedness, the disgrace of religion.

To repair the evil of which he had been in part the cause, De Rancé commenced his novitiate in 1663, in the convent of Perseigne. In 1664 he made his profession, and shortly after received at Seez, in the Church of St. Martin, the abbatial benediction and investiture of his abbey from Dr. Patrick Plunket, Bishop of Ardagh, in Ireland, who had himself been a Cistercian previously to his elevation to the episcopacy. On the day after this ceremony, De Rancé, who had hitherto been abbot only in commendam, took formal possession of his monastery, henceforth to forget his former honours, riches, and glory, and to be brother Armand John, regular abbot of La Trappe.

"From the commencement of his labours in this department to his death, there are inscribed in the registers of the convent no less than ninety-seven professed religious, and forty-nine lay brothers. They presented themselves

for admission slowly in the commencement, but when the virtues and examples of the members and the abbot became better known, the postulants that came to the monastery were more than they could well accommodate. The penitent who felt his heart pressed down by the consciousness of guilt, and the Christian who aspired to more than ordinary perfection, sought refuge within its walls; and many a contrite and humble soul, on which the recollections of early days pressed dark and heavily, came to tread in the footsteps of the abbot, and prepare for its dread accounting.....Various as are the ways of God with man, and manifold as are the means by which souls are conducted to sanctity, so are the names of those who first presented themselves, and whose characters are described in its early archives.

"Ragobert, once a monk of Clairvaux, sought in vain within the degenerate cloisters of St. Bernard, the perfection which he found at La Trappe. Le Nain, elder brother of the illustrious Tillemont, became sub-prior, and employed his pen in sketching the lives of the eminent saints of Citeaux, and likewise the biography of his own abbot. Brother Placid was among the first that entered. On his death, awaiting the approach of his agony, he was so full of joy and hope, that when asked by his abbot whither he was going, he replied: 'To the mansions of the blessed to be sure.' Brother Bernard had just received the viaticum, when a severe fit of coughing came on; expectoration would have relieved him, but out of respect to the body of his Lord that reposed in his bosom, he did violence to the requirements of his physical nature, and died a martyr to his reverence for the Eucharist. Claude Cordin, a learned doctor of Sorbonne, who, after a career of much distinction in the theological world, and after having had the care of souls in Paris, and a considerable curacy in the diocese of Sens, took the habit of religion and the name of Arsenius, and died in the odour of

sanctity. A few days after his death, one of the brothers said, he saw him surrounded with a brilliant light, and heard him say in rapturous ecstacy, 'Oh if you knew what it was to be in the society of the saints!'

"Peter Foré had been a lieutenant of grenadiers. He bore about him the marks of several engagements, in which he had proved himself the bravest of the brave; but he was also wicked and depraved But in the darkest depths of guilt there is an element of correction. He heard of the wonders of La Trappe, and determined to seek for admission. Starting from his place of refuge, twelve warrants were out against him, he travelled in a few days more than two hundred leagues, through bye-paths, and under heavy rains; and on a cold day in winter presented himself at the gate of the convent. His eye was wild and blood-shot; his features haggard; his look indicative of despair. The hardships he had undergone imparted a savage fierceness to his whole demeanour. He asked, and obtained admission. The repenting sinner, be he who or what he may, was sure to be received; and Foré was not unworthy of the kindness shown him during the few weeks he survived, for alas! his course of penance was short. His iron frame was already broken by the irregularities of his previous life. Ulcers began to form in his chest. Reduced to extremity, he asked to be laid on a bed of ashes, and died in the warmest sentiments of compunction.*

"The wonders of asceticism and rigorous self-denialwhich are recorded of the early members of La Trappe, would have been worthy of the solitaries of the Thebaid; and had St. Pachomius been admitted to contemplate that com-

* Those who may wish to see the lives and deaths of the early members of La Trappe, after its reform by Abbé Rancé, will find them given concisely in the "Relation de la vie et de la mort de quelques religieux de l'abbaye de La Trappe," in 4 vols. a Paris, 1758.

munity, he would have been proud to acknowledge them as brothers.

"The monks, though living in the same house, were strangers to one another. Each one followed to the choir, the garden, or the refectory, the feet that were moving before him, but he never raised his eyes to discover to whom the feet belonged. There were some who passed the entire year of their novitiate without lifting up their eyes, and who after that long period, could not tell how the ceiling of their cells was constructed, or whether they had any ceilings at all. There is mention made of one, whose whole anxiety was for an only brother, whom he had left leading a scandalous and disorderly life in the world. Since he entered the convent, he never passed a day without shedding a tear over his miserable condition, and begging for him, from God the grace of repentance and amendment. On his dying bed he asked one request of the abbot, it was for a continuance of his prayers for the same purpose. De Rancé retired for a moment, and returned with one of the most useful and valued members of the brotherhood. When the cowl which concealed his features was removed, the dying monk recognized the brother for whom he had so often wept and prayed. [See the XXIX. vol. of the Mirror.]

"An aged monk was once selected to attend a youth of great promise, who had entered the monastery, and was dying of a slow decline. Day and night he watched by his bed, with the most anxious care, and the most untiring solicitude, but in vain. The young man pined away like a crushed and broken flower, and his remains were borne to their resting place, in the burial ground of the brethren. One day the aged monk was observed standing over the grave of the departed. Tears flowed down his wrinkled cheeks, and his breast heaved with the intensity of his emotion; for a moment, nature triumphed over duty. The inscription upon the grave, told him that it was the

grave of his only son. He had not seen him since he left him a boy, to the care of his guardians, in the world.

"Such was their ignorance of the world's ways and usages, that when the Duchess of Guise was permitted to see the chapel, one of the brethren accused himself in chapter, of having looked at the bishop that had visited the convent. Even the death of Louis XIV. occurred some months before it was known to any but the abbot. A traveller, making his way through the mountains, missed his path; he wandered about some time after sunset, in danger of being dashed to pieces among the rocks, or of sinking in the morasses that surrounded him. About eight o'clock he heard the tolling of a large bell, and, with some difficulty, made his way to the spot from which the sound proceeded. It was a large monastery. He sought shelter for the night, and was admitted. One kind attendant took care of his jaded steed, another divested him of his wet and travel-stained habiliments, another conducted him to the apartment where he got refreshment, and where a plain but neat bed received his weary limbs. But, from his entrance to his departure in the morning, strange to say, no sound of human voice broke upon his ear. His noiseless attendants came and went, like so many beings of another world, ready to anticipate his slightest wish; but, as it was the hour of silence, even for those who waited upon strangers, not a word was spoken when he went, or when he came. [Dublin Review, Life of De Rancé, by C. Chateaubriand, No. XXXIV.]

"The more perfectly to renounce their own will, the religious were bound not only to obey their superiors, but, in the true spirit of St. Benedict, to obey the least sign from one another, even from the last among the lay brothers. 'Abbot John, told the brother who was gardener, that it would be better they should be without herbs, than that there should be found in the garden, one plant of self-will. It happened that a venerable abbot of a

very great monastery of the Cistercian Order, full seventy years of age, being lodged at La Trappe, had by a sign, out of humility, refused to suffer a lay brother to take the trouble to show him the way to his cell at night ; but this being contrary to the rule of the house, in relation to obedience to every one, the next day De Rancé, in chapter, reproached the abbot, that, not content to ruin discipline and souls at home, he came to spread scandal among them ; and enjoined him a public penance.' " [Alban Butler's Life of St. Robert, note.]

We here wish to correct a mistake common to many writers who have not closely examined the subject. We will state it in the words of the writer whom we have quoted on De Rancé's life in the Dublin Review. " After his return from Rome, De Rancé began to introduce the observance of that stricter discipline which distinguishes the Trappist institute from the other houses of the Cistercian Order." And the accurate Alban Butler makes this mistatement in a note attached to his life of St. Robert. " Abbé Rancé introduced at La Trappe a reformation of the Cistercian Order according to the austere primitive institute of St. Bennet, afterwards renewed by St. Bernard." Now the reader will see from the first part of this history, that St Bernard found the strict and primitive institute of St. Bennet already established and practised at Citeaux, when he entered that monastery, by his illustrious predecessors, Robert, Alberic, and Stephen, the founders of the Cistercian Order.

With respect to the statement that De Rancé established a stricter discipline than the Cistercian Institute, it is entirely incorrect; and likewise that he brought back the " austere primitive institute of St. Bennet." He desired to do so, but he feared that he and his religious would not be able to support the rigorous fasts enjoined by the usages of Citeaux, and grounded upon the rule of St. Benedict. In 1672, on the Feast of All Saints, he com-

menced with his community the strict winter fast of taking but one meal in the day; and this not till after none, about half past two, p. m. They continued this fast till the following Easter, 1673; when De Rancé had remarked the weakness, the exhaustion of his brethren, he trembled for their health, and adopted the following mitigations. During the winter season, from the 14th of September till Easter, dinner was to be taken at twelve o'clock, except on the fasts of the church, when it was taken half an hour later. In the evening there was a collation of two ounces of bread, with salad, milk, or cheese; and on fasts of the church, one ounce of bread. During the summer season, the dinner was taken at half-past ten, a. m. and the collation at five in the evening. Compare these regulations of diet with the usages of Citeaux, mentioned by us, chapter VI., or with the 41st chapter of St. Benedict's rule, and it will be found as De Rancé himself states, that the strict observance of Citeaux was not observed at La Trappe in his time.

On Sundays and festivals a public conference was held during an hour, in which the brethren were allowed to speak upon spiritual and edifying subjects. This was undoubtedly a relaxation of the strict and perpetual silence enforced by the usages of Citeaux, at least with respect to public conversation. The choir religious had not so much manual labour under De Rancé as under St. Stephen.*

In 1834, the houses of the Cistercian Institute which followed Dom. Augustine's regulations of Val Saint, (which we shall mention in the following chapter) returned by the permission and the sanction of the Holy See, to the ancient and literal usages of Citeaux, and they are now called "The Cistercian Congregation of our Lady of La

* Vide Les Réglemens de l'Abbaye de Nôtre Dame de la Trappe en Forme de Constitutions, 1690; also, Les Trappistes de l'ordre de Citeaux au xix^e^ siècle &c,, par M. Casimir Gaillardin, &c. 2 vols. 1844. vol. i. p. 156, and vol. ii. p. 497.

Trappe." The abbot of this monastery is by right of this office the general of the congregation. The general chapter is held every year at La Trappe. There are now sixteen houses of this congregation, at the head of them the great La Trappe itself, leading a more austere life than the one which obtained for the monks of De Rancé a European celebrity. There are about ten houses united in congregation under a vicar general, appointed every five years, still adhering to the milder constitutions of De Rancé. The Cistercian monasteries in Belgium are of this congregation.

"Who will say that, even in these evil days, the fate of empires, and the destiny of peoples, are not more influenced by some poor and unknown solitary, whose voice ascends to Heaven in secret, than the movements of armed men, or the intrigues of diplomatic agency, to which they are generally ascribed? The Trappist, and similar institutes, are not to be viewed independently in themselves. They are but parts of the Christian system, and must be considered in their bearing upon the whole. It was no small service for the Trappist institution, to have given the corrupt times in which it originated, an example of penance and mortification. We know of no lessons more needed by the voluptuousness of those among whom De Rancé lived. The almost pagan tendency and epicurean morality, or immorality of the day, required to be checked and censured by the example of Christian mortification. The same service which the monks of the Thebaid rendered to the tottering empire of the Cæsars was conferred by the Trappists upon the libertinism of their own. De Rancé, was to the Longuevilles and Montmorencys, what Anthony and Arsenius were to the degenerate children of Constantine. The marvellous and ever-abiding spirit which presides over the children of God, will always provide a fitting and adequate remedy for the disorder of the time; and the salt of the earth will never be wanting,

when the corruption of human nature requires it to be applied.

"Among the names of those who, from time to time, visited the monastery, to be edified by its inmates, and witness the wonders which had been achieved among them," the one which strikes us first is that of Bossuet. "He was college companion," says M. Chateaubriand, "of the abbot, and he went to see his old friend. He rose in La Trappe like the noonday sun over some forest wilderness. Eight times did the eagle of Meaux ascend to his eyrie among the mountains, and nowhere did he feel himself more at home than at La Trappe. Brilliant minds have sometimes a passion for out-of-the-way places. ..... He took a particular pleasure in hearing the brethren sing the divine office. The solemn chaunting of the psalms, which was the only sound that could be heard; the long pauses, the soft and searching tones of the 'Salve Regina,' inspired him with a devotional feeling that was very acceptable to him. He fancied, perhaps, at La Trappe that he heard the world and its cares hurrying by on the wings of each passing wind. It was as if he stood in one of those distant fortresses which our country has established upon the very confines of civilization, where morning and evening the hills around echo sounds which they never heard before, for the strangers are singing some sweet melody to remind them of their native land. One by one the strangers die away, and the notes of that sweet song are echoed back no more. Bossuet took care to attend the service of the night as well as of the day. Before vespers he took a walk in company with De Rancé. I had pointed out to me, near the Bernard grotto, a path overrun with brambles, and which formerly was a causeway between two lakes. Those same feet which carried me during my day-dreams of René, walked over this causeway, which formerly supported two great men while talking over heavenly things. On the green banks by my side, I almost

fancied I saw projected the shadows of the greatest orator of France, and the first anchoret of his time."*

Among the illustrious visitors, we must not forget our own unfortunate James II., and his amiable queen, Mary of Modena, during the days of their exile. James "bore his reverses with dignity, and hallowed his sufferings by patience and enduring fortitude. God chastens those whom He loves; and better may have been the crown of thorns which was given Him to wear, than any that earthly monarch ever wore. It was on an autumn evening in the eventful year 1690, that James rode up to the gate of the convent, attended by a few friends, Lord Dumbarton among the number. He was kindly received by the abbot, and after partaking of his hospitality, attended evening service in the chapel. After communicating on the following morning, and inspecting the different occupations of the religious, he visited a recluse that lived some distance upon the mountains. His solitude was never interrupted, save by an occasional visit from his abbot, and he spent the greater part of his time in prayer. In the recluse James immediately recognized an officer who had formerly distinguished himself in his army. He asked him at what hour in the winter mornings he attended the service of the chapel in the convent, and was answered at half-past three. "Surely," said Lord Dumbarton, "that is impossible. The way is dark and dreary, and at that hour is highly dangerous." "Ah!" said the old soldier, "I have served my king in frost and snow, by night and day for many a year, and I should blush, indeed, if I were not to do as much for the Master who has called me to His service now, and whose uniform I wear." The afflicted monarch turned away his head. His attendants remarked that his eyes were filled with tears. On his departure the following day, he knelt down

* p. 173.

to receive the abbot's blessing, and on rising he leant for support on the arm of a monk that was near him. On looking to express his thanks, he saw in him another of his followers, the Hon. Robert Graham. He too had been an officer in his army, and lost besides a splendid fortune in his service. His majesty spoke a few words of kind recollection. Even the solitudes of La Trappe were filled with the ruins of his greatness.

When James had mounted his horse to return to St. Germain, he said to De Rancé, "We must come here to learn how to respect God. I will endeavour, as much as my situation will permit, to imitate you in something; and if God spares my life, I will return and make a retreat with you." The king kept his promise, and returned every year to La Trappe as long as he was able, and joined in all the religious exercises of the community, and sometimes, with uncovered head, attended the spiritual conferences.

In 1696, he brought his queen, Mary of Modena, to see the monastery, into which she was permitted entrance by a privilege granted to the ladies of royal families. She would often speak afterwards of what she had seen there, and publish, in flattering terms, her conversations with the abbot, and the great consolation with which he had soothed her mind in her misfortunes. James carried out at St. Germain that which he declared he would do, the spirit of penance, which he had imbibed in this asylum of religious solitude. After his death, an iron chain was discovered fastened tight around his waist. To show what was the tenor of his thoughts after these visits to La Trappe, we will give the following extract from Miss Strickland's beautiful and instructive life of Mary, his queen, in which much interesting matter may be found relative to this subject.

"The conversation turning on death, he expressed so much desire for that event, that the queen was much

distressed. 'Alas!' said she, with tears in her eyes, 'what would become of me and your little ones if we were deprived of you?' 'God,' he replied, 'will take care of you and our children; for what am I but a poor feeble man, incapable of doing anything without Him?' Mary Beatrice, whose heart was full, went to the table to conceal her emotion, by pretending to look for a book. The assistant, (the incident took place at a convent,) who tenderly loved the queen, softly approached the king, and said to him, 'We humbly entreat your majesty not to speak of your death to the queen, for it always afflicts her.' 'I do so to prepare her for that event,' replied James, 'since it is a thing which in the course of nature must soon occur, and it is proper to accustom her to the certainty of it.' The assistant said to the queen, when they were alone, 'Madame, I have taken the liberty of begging the king not to talk of death to your majesty, to make you sad.' The queen smiled, and said, 'It will not trouble me any more. He is accustomed to talk to me about it very often, and, above all, I am sure it will not accelerate his death a single moment.' " [p. 346.] James, to his dying day, cherished a most grateful remembrance of the benefits which he had derived from the edifying lives of the abbot and his community, in the secluded valley of La Trappe.

We must now briefly speak of the death of the illustrious abbot and reformer of La Trappe. Broken down by infirmities, he tendered to the king his resignation in 1695, and was allowed to appoint his successor. This prevented the abbey from being again given away in commendam. His successor died within a year after his appointment. De Rancé elected another, but baffled in his usual penetration, he fixed upon one who was unworthy of his office, and who, after falling into some grievous fault, resigned. De Rancé selected a third, who survived him, and continued the same strict and exem-

plary mode of life. The last six years of his mortality De Rancé spent in the infirmary, in an easy chair, almost without changing his position. When the lay brother in attendance came to give him a drink, he would say with a smile, "Here is my persecutor again."

On the 26th of October, 1700, he was sensible of his approaching death. The Bishop of Seez, his friend and confessor, was in attendance. The dying abbot desired to be placed on his knees, that he might receive the bishop's blessing; then he was placed on a bed of ashes, in the spirit of the Cistercian Institute, and, as a faithful disciple of St. Stephen and St. Bernard, "a king might envy the unearthly joy that sparkled in his eyes as he helped to arrange his emaciated limbs upon his bed of pain." Whilst psalms were repeated alternately by his attendants, the bishop gave out, "Lord, Thou art my protector and my deliverer;" "O Lord, do not delay," faintly whispered the dying abbot. They were his last words. Gazing steadfastly at his friend for a moment, and then lifting his eyes to heaven, he expired. He was seventy-four years of age; half of this number, thirty-seven, he had spent in the penitential exercises of the cloister. He was buried in the common cemetry of his convent. In death, as in life, he wished to be in the midst of his brethren.

At his death, La Trappe was under the direction of Jacques de la Cour, and continued for near a century in the strict observance of the reform which had been established by the master mind of De Rancé. "Peter Olivier was the seventh abbot in succession from him, when, sometime in the middle of the year 1791, two commissioners from the administrative assembly of the department of Orne, presented themselves at the convent, to inquire why, or on what grounds, they claimed exemption from the law of the National Assembly, which surpressed the religious orders in France. There were then in the convent fifty-three choir religious, thirty-seven lay-brothers, and five

novices. They were all called in, one by one, and minutely examined. The inquisitors reported favourably. 'With the exception of five or six,' they said, 'and these were persons naturally of weak minds, the choir religious are in general of very strong and decided character, which has not been at all impaired by fastings and austerities. Their thoughts are utterly absorbed by religion. The piety of some, and it is easy to perceive it by their words, has even reached the very highest degree of enthusiasm. The others, who are the majority, are under the influence of a more subdued spirit. They seem to have the most sincere affection for their state of life, and to find in it a kind of happiness and tranquillity, which are highly fascinating.... The executive of the department reported that their plea of exemption should not be allowed, and the constituent assembly pronounced the sentence of suppression.'" Our next chapter will inform us what became of the exiled brotherhood.

[The following writers have given us the Life of De Rancé: Le Nain, who was his subprior, Maupeou, Marsollier, Chateaubriand, and Charles Butler. Much interesting matter may be found in the History of La Trappe from its commencement, by Casimir Gaillardin. 1840.]

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PETITION OF THE ADJACENT TOWNS IN FAVOUR OF LA TRAPPE, DOM. AUGUSTINE. HIS EARLY LIFE. ENTRANCE INTO RELIGION. MASTER OF NOVICES. JOURNEY TO SWITZERLAND. THE HOLY VALLEY OBTAINED FROM THE CANTONAL GOVERNMENT OF FRIBOURG. THE REMOVAL OF TWENTY-FOUR MEMBERS OF LA TRAPPE TO THE HOLY VALLEY. THE ORIGIN OF THE HOLY VALLEY. THE DESTRUCTION OF LA TRAPPE. THE LAST OF ITS COMMUNITY BURIED IN ITS CEMETERY. DIFFICULTIES OF THE HOLY VALLEY. ITS INCREASE. ADDITIONAL AUSTERITIES. ERECTION INTO AN ABBEY. FILIATIONS. THIRD ORDER FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF YOUTH. THE EXPULSION OF THE RELIGIOUS FROM THE HOLY VALLEY BY THE FRENCH ARMIES. THEIR WANDERINGS. THE RESUSCITATION OF LA TRAPPE. THE DEATH OF DOM. AUGUSTINE.

When the municipalities of Mortagne, Aigle, Veineuil, and Soligny, heard that La Trappe was doomed, with all the other religious houses in France, to destruction, by the constituent assembly in 1790, they united in a strong but respectful petition in its favour ; and begged, for the sake of the purity of the life of its inmates, their great charity, and the benefits they conferred upon the surrounding district, that it might be spared the fate of being included in the general sentence of abolition. This powerful appeal from an extensive population delayed, for some time, the seizure of theproperty and the expulsion of the brethren. These, clinging to the monastery with a warm attachment, as to the home of their hearts' peace, as

to the vestibule which would introduce them into the palace of heaven, fondly flattered themselves that they would be forgotten, and left unmolested in their distant solitude, and unobtrusive mode of life. But the Master of novices, Dom. Augustine, who received from time to time information from persons that were watching the current of public events, saw the fallacy of such expectations, and discouraged them, even in opposition to the unanimous opinion of his superiors and brethren. A few words relative to the history of this master of novices are demanded by the important part, which he performed in the preservation of the Cistercian Institute, after its abolition in France during the troubles of the great Revolution.

In 1780, a young priest, twenty-six years of age, presented himself as a postulant at the abbey gates of La Trappe. His name was Louis Henry Lestrange. He was descended from a noble family of Vivarais. His father was an officer of the household troops of Louis XV.; but, from scruples of conscience, abandoned the dissipation of the court. His mother was the daughter of an Irish gentleman, who had shared in the misfortunes of James II. Louis Henry was the fourteenth child of his pious parents, and was taught by his mother to cherish a fervent devotion to the Blessed Virgin. He was a youth of great application to his studies, and displayed a considerable amount of talent during the course of his education. He finished his theology at the seminary of St. Sulpice at Paris. He was ordained priest at the age of twenty-four, in the year 1778, and immediately assumed his duties among the clergy, who directed the large parish of St. Sulpice. Shortly afterwards the Archbishop of Vienne appointed him his vicar-general. Humility prompted the young priest to decline a charge of such responsibility, which required experience and knowledge greater than he believed himself to possess. But obedience was dearer to him than self-opinion, and he yielded to the voice of

authority. He had scarcely resigned himself to his new functions, and set himself to the hearty preparation for their worthy fulfilment, when the archbishop asked and obtained him for his coadjutor.

Henry Lestrange, from his entrance into the ecclesiastical state, had entertained the resolution of terminating his days in the monastery of La Trappe. But his friendship with penance and mortification was not to commence until he had spent the vigour of his manhood, and the glow of his well educated mind in the service of God's Church. The dread, however, of the episcopacy so alarmed him, that he hastened, or rather stole away from Vienne, and concealed himself at once in the memorable solitude, which lay embosomed in the forests of Le Perche. Neither the remonstrances of the archbishop, nor the solicitations of the directors of the Seminary at Lyons—no, nor the sensibility of filial affection, could induce him to leave the habitation which he had chosen for his inheritance.

He asked for and received the habit, and thus closed the door which might have opened to him the emoluments and the honours of the world. At the termination of his year's novitiate, he was professed under the name of Augustine. At the time when the National Assembly had confiscated ecclesiastical property, and withdrawn from religious persons the sanction of the civil law, Dom. Augustine was master of Novices, at the great La Trappe. He foresaw, by the aid of that advice which, as we have already observed, he received from his friends on the scene of action, and noting the shadows which future events were casting before them,—the fearful catastrophe that was about to sweep religion from the face of his native land. Indeed, there were few persons even of the lowest classes, who did not feel the coming impulse of extraordinary changes, as cattle are observed to be disturbed before an approaching thunder storm. Not, how-

ever, without much difficulty, did he obtain permission to visit Switzerland, in quest of an asylum for himself and his persecuted brotherhood. On his journey he received the approbation of the abbots of Clairvaux and Citeaux, with many highly commendatory letters from bishops and influential persons. He presented, on his arrival at Fribourg, to the bishop and chief counsellers of state in that canton, the following petition:

"Honourable Sirs,

"In the sad and calamitous circumstances into which we, the monks of La Trappe, are now plunged, by the destruction of our property, and the abolition of our holy institute, yea, and the menaces which threaten the existence of religion itself, we have been prompted by prudence to have recourse to your kindness and charity, you who have displayed so much zeal in the defence of the true faith, and despised the many seductions which tempted you from the path of salvation. What gratitude do you not owe to God, who has distinguished you from so many others in a matter so important, so essential, as religion? That deposit of faith which you have received pure and undefiled from God, through the instrumentality of man, we, confidently relying upon your benevolence, now earnestly solicit from your piety. Testify, therefore, to God your gracefulness, by conferring upon us the favour which, in similar circumstances, you once received from others.

"Our request may be easily granted, since it is in itself of little importance. We merely ask for a home in some forest or deep ravine, a small extent of some wild and uncultivated district, that we may fertilize it by our perspiration, and draw down upon it the benediction of heaven by our prayers. When we have constructed cells of straw and mud, we will continue our holy state of life, in esteem of which we have parted with everything that

we possess, and for the preservation of which we would willingly sacrifice all the treasures of earth.

"Do not fear that we shall become a burden to any one. Our determination is to live, as our holy rule exhorts us, by the labour of our hands, and thus supply the want of that property of which we have been cruelly deprived. We cherish hopes of being able to assist the poor that may dwell around us, for almsdeeds is one of our principal duties, and the one which affords us in its exercise the sweetest consolation. God will undoubtedly bless us with the means of practising charity, if we do not prove unfaithful in our obligations to Him. Many persons of distinction have desired to be admitted members of our community, and have placed their estates at our disposal, so that far from being a charge upon the government, we shall prove a source of relief to those among whom we may be located.

"Our case, moreover, is different from that of other religious bodies. Vegetables, seasoned with salt, are our diet; the coarsest cloth of the country where we reside our best, our only apparel. A small sum, therefore, will support a large community in such a simple and primitive mode of living.

We humbly, then, beseech you to make your humanity and piety known to the world, by affording us an asylum in your territory. All we crave is the liberty to be faithful to our vows, and to preserve our holy institute. If you deign to grant us this favour, we will repay you with grateful hearts, and implore every day from the God of mercy blessings upon your persons, your families, your country, and your citizens."

The prayer of this petition was heard and granted, but only for the limited number of twenty-four brethren. There exists in the canton of Fribourg a valley almost hidden from sight, and buried amidst the forests and precipitous rocks, which close it in on every side. For more

than six hundred years it has been called Valsainte, or the Holy Valley. The Carthusians obtained it in grant from the Lord of Charmey, and built in it about the middle of the thirteenth century a monastery of their order. The black heath and moorland, and the thick impenetrable coppice, soon presented the pleasing transformation of fertile pasturage, and meadows decked with every variety of flower, smiling around the retreat of hospitality. The Carthusians extended their amelioration beyond the environs of their own domain, and deserved by their invaluable services the imperishable gratitude of their neighbours. Yet the government of Fribourg, in the delirium of a philosophical mania, suppressed this convent in the year 1776. The religious retired into another house of their order. An ocular witness, Bernard of Lenzbourg, tells us, that the day of the community's departure was a day of mourning for the population, and that the rocks and the woods reechoed with doleful lamentations. Many were the maledictions invoked by the peasantry upon the spoliators of the Holy Valley, whom they designated the sacrilegious robbers of the patrimony of the poor. Of all the piety which flourished in this peaceful asylum, there remained only the Sunday's Mass, for the benefit of the shepherds of the mountains. This deserted monastery with its gardens, was given by the council of Fribourg to the exiled Cistercians upon easy conditions.

Dom. Augustine returned with haste to select the religious destined for the Holy Valley; and found himself again at Fribourg with twenty-one of his brethren (three had deserted on the journey), and some novices, on the first of June, 1791. He was appointed superior of Valsainte, with ample powers for its direction by the abbot of Clairvaux.

All that remained of La Trappe was concentrated in the Holy Valley. For the brethren who were left in France were not allowed the liberty of residing and dying in their

monastery. We read in the register of the dead, under the date of the 17th of March, 1792, this mournful reflection: "The last of the religious of La Trappe, who died in this holy asylum, in which he had been consecrated to religion, Utinam et nos!"

The remainder of the brotherhood were dispersed, their property sold by public auction, with the exception of the woods, which were made over to the new administration of forests. Then commenced the work of demolition. The walls were thrown down, and part of the forest felled, and left an uncultivated heath, which saddens the eye of the traveller to this day. The fields, which had been rendered so fertile by the hard labour of the monks, returned, under their new proprietors, to their wonted, wild, and barren condition. Thus, the spoliators reaped no benefit from their spoliation. Ruins in a desert were all the profit impiety derived from the suppression of La Trappe.

God, the sovereign Reformer of the judgments of men, had excepted the excellent community of this illustrious monastery from the awful sentence pronounced against the church in France. Whilst every thing around this community perished, kings, nobles, clergy, and monastic bodies, God gathered it under the shadow of his wings, withdrew it from the midst of iniquity, and carried it peaceably into the bosom of the hospitable mountains of Switzerland.

Dom. Augustine, after he had taken possession of the Carthusian convent of Valsainte, called it Our Lady of the Holy Valley. The brethren, assembled in chapter the first Sunday after their arrival, passed a resolution, that the first of June, or the nearest Sunday, should be kept as a festival, or commemorative anniversary of their entrance into Fribourg. They desired, at the same time, to testify their gratitude to the Blessed Virgin, and to renew to her their devoted fidelity. Hence, they appointed that

the Litanies of our Lady should be sung on all Sundays and festivals of the year.

Many were the grievous privations to which the brethren had to submit, from the dilapidation of the interior of the house, the scanty supply of clothing, and the actual want of the common necessaries of life. Indeed, the small colony would soon have been under the necessity of abandoning their new home through absolute want, had not postulants possessed of property presented themselves for admission. There were vacancies for many novices, even according to the strict terms of agreement with the authorities of the canton. Hence, their difficulties soon vanished. In gratitude for their providential deliverance from the horrors of the French Revolution, which swept away in its mighty hurricane all vestiges of religion, and for their gracious reception in the Holy Valley, Dom. Augustine believed it incumbent upon him to exhort his brethren to greater austerity in God's service than they had practised in the peaceful solitude of La Trappe. "What," he said, "would not our forefathers have done in similar circumstances? Not only our religion, but our very existence was threatened. Now we are again settled in peace; and, praise God, in sweet retirement. In all this we are encouraged by our holy founder, St. Benedict, who terms his rule, "the commencement of a perfect life."

In compliance with this exhortation, the hours of rest were curtailed, both night and morning. The brethren rose in time to begin office at half-past one o'clock, that is, half-an-hour sooner than the usual rising. In the evening, a quarter of an hour was spent in prayer beyond the usual hour of retiring to rest. The office was chaunted more frequently; this necessarily brought in a greater number of days for earlier rising; that is, at twelve and one o'clock, accordingly as the whole or only portions of the matins were sung. All drink but water was forbidden at

the table of the refectory. The food was reduced to the very plainest in quality, with no seasoning but salt. No collation was allowed on fast-days of the Order and of the Church. The straw matresses were removed from the dormitory ; and nothing was spread over the boards but a piece of thin serge to protect the habit. No one was allowed to speak to a superior without soliciting permission by putting his finger to his lips. Many bodily penances were appointed, for breaches of the newly established regulations. These regulations were drawn up in form, and printed together with a brief history of the emigration to Valsainte in two 4to vols. They never received the solemn sanction of Rome ; and they are now a dead letter. They were abolished in 1834 ; and the primitive usages of Citeaux re-established, and enjoined observance. These we have already described in chapter VI. It is worthy of remark, that no reform which has exceeded the strict letter and spirit of St. Benedict's rules, in the western world, has ever been solemnly approved by the church, or even enjoyed more than a passing existence. What a strong confirmation does this give to the opinion of St. Gregory the Great, that St. Benedict wrote his admirable code of life under the dictation of the Holy Spirit.

Three days after the entrance of the brotherhood into Valsainte, the Bishop of Lusanne took them under his special protection, and conceded to them all the privileges granted by the Holy See to the Order of Citeaux ; observing that his duty obliged him to watch more tenderly over those who had abandoned all things for the love of Jesus Christ.

Pius VI. gave in 1792, at the request of many influential persons, the Archbishop of Damas, Cardinal Bernis, Cardinal Archbishop of Malines, and Cardinal Rochefoucauld, the brief necessary for the erection of Valsainte into an abbey. But the Pope's intentions were delayed by the government of Fribourg, which expressed

great jealousy, in not receiving the deference of a consultation upon this subject. In 1794, the matter was amicably arranged, and the house of the Holy Valley was raised to the dignity of an abbey; and Dom. Augustine received the investiture from the papal nuncio in Switzerland. The brief runs thus: "We erect Valsainte into an abbey of the order and congregation of La Trappe, with all the rights, privileges, honours, favours and indults, which other abbeys of this order have used, enjoyed, and made available.....We approve and confirm the canonical election of the Rev. Father Lestrange, as abbot of the same, with all the powers and authority necessary for the discharge of his office conformably to the constitutions of the said order. And we wish that the authority of the new abbot should be exercised, not only over the abbey of Valsainte, but over every filiation that may spring from it, in whatever part of the world this may happen. Hence the abbot of the Holy Valley, shall be regarded as the immediate father of all the colonies which he may establish; and he shall enjoy all the power usually granted by the constitutions of the order, to such immediate superior."

Public admiration gave to Valsainte a European celebrity and importance. The journey of the brethren through France, amidst the raging storm of impiety, had not been effected so happily, without producing on reflective minds a profound impression. The renewal of ancient austerities, at this epoch of general apostacy, awakened a lively curiosity. The holy valley soon received a crowd of visitors, of all ranks and classes, clergy and laity, from western Europe. This concourse swelled the number of postulants, and diffused the fame of the newly established abbey. The excellent order which reigned in this holy asylum, the affectionate obedience of the brothers, the untiring devotedness of the superior, the intimate union of hearts, and the felicity which shed upon all the commu-

nity the smile of cheerfulness, edified strangers, and disposed them favourably towards religion. Some, desirous of participating in this happiness, so foreign to the world, asked permission to be admitted among the penitents; others carried home with them a grateful remembrance of the scenes which they had witnessed.

Scarcely had the monastery been established two years, when applications for colonies were made from Spain and Belgium. The community now exceeded the number twenty-four. The novices from France had made their profession; and fresh postulants were waiting for their novitiate. Hence in 1793, Dom. Augustine sent out filiations to Catalonia, in Spain, to Darfeld in Westphalia, and to Monbrech in Piedmont. We shall see in the following chapter, how a colony destined for Canada was detained in England, and established at Lullworth.

Thus La Trappe, after having been the model of religious orders in France more than a hundred years, becomes in exile the refuge and the centre of religious life. It displays to Europe the eminent virtues which France has despised. It carries upon its forehead the sign of immortality. Its patience is proof against all trials. It sees empires pass away. It survives its persecutors, and awaits, in silent resignation, the period when God, satisfied with the many services which it has performed in its banishment, will restore it to liberty, and allow it to repose in its own native land.

In the year 1796, Dom. Augustine founded a convent of his order in Valais. Among these Trappestines, as they were called, there was a member of the illustrious house of Conde, with many ladies from France. He established for their religious guidance and instruction, a convent of monks in the same neighbourhood.

In the following year he founded an institute for the instruction of youth. The Christian education of children in France had perished with the suppression of the com-

munities devoted to educational purposes. In Switzerland it was very much neglected. He was convinced that upon the education given to the child depends the after-life, the career of the man, and that the teachers of youth make nations either Christian or infidel, according as they themselves are true believers or free thinkers, virtuous or immoral. Hence he conceived the project of giving to the monastery of the Holy Valley, the care of public education, and of reforming, through its extensive influence the manners of civil society.

It was difficult, however, to bend the Cistercian Institute to new duties and occupations. Solitude, continual penance, the chanting of office, manual labour, left the religious no time, no strength for the fatigues of teaching. The abbot of Valsainte saw all this and turned his attention to the institution of a class of individuals, who under the name of the third order of our Lady of La Trappe, should undertake this office of instructing youth, according to particular rules, which would exempt them from some portion of the austerities required by the Cistercian Institute.

Pius VII. addressed to Dom. Augustine, in favour of the third Order of his Congregation, the following brief:

"Dear Sir,

You have displayed great love and zeal towards the Christian republic, by applying yourself with so much wisdom and energy to the sound education of children. We have no means of destroying the pest of perverse doctrine and corrupt morals, more efficacious than education. Thus, instead of disdaining, we have received with great joy, your description of the third order of brothers, who entirely devote themselves to the care of teaching children the precepts of Christian doctrine, and the fundamental principles of education. And the congregation of our brethren, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church,

to whom we have submitted the examination and the appreciation of this institute, have informed us, that your undertaking deserves great praise. We exhort you, therefore, to persevere in your laudable design. Yes, take courage, dear son; have confidence; press on in the glorious path before you. The favour, the authority, the support of the Apostolic See, shall never be wanting to you."

Schools were accordingly opened, and in a short time more than a hundred and fifty pupils were receiving in the seminary of Valsainte, a practical and religious education. But this career of prosperity was not to last. In 1798, the victorious armies of the French Directory overran Switzerland, and established the Helvetian republic. As this invasion was professedly undertaken in consequence of the intrigues of the French, who had taken refuge within its frontiers, the French Trappists could not expect favour. The entire establishment was broken up, and two hundred and fifty monks and nuns were cast forth again upon the world. Many of the pupils had become so attached to their masters, that they preferred to be houseless wanderers with them, than to enjoy peace and comfort at home. A body of seventy-four religious made their way in the direction of Munich, where Dom. Augustine received a message from the emperor Paul, stating that he would give an asylum to fifteen monks and as many nuns. in his dominions. After conducting them to their assigned place of abode, at Orcha, in the duchy of Mohilev, in White Russia, Augustine repaired to the capital, and succeeded in obtaining the imperial protection for the remainder of his followers; they had been wandering in the Austrian dominions, but being expelled thence by the orders of government, had passed into Russian Poland. There the abbot found them on his return from St. Petersburgh, having performed the journey during the depth of

winter. He conducted them to the houses appointed for their use by Paul, in the diocese of Lucko in Lithuania.

They were not well fixed in their new abodes, when the imperial policy was reversed, and an ukase was issued, expelling every native of France from his dominions. Once more had they to go forth. After many hardships, they arrived at Dantzic, and were received with every mark of attention by the Protestant authorities of the town, who gave them as a place of temporary residence, the old convent of the Brigitines. It was a Protestant merchant, too, that gave them the means of proceeding to Lubeck, and subsequently to Altona, where they spent the winter of 1801—2. Baffled on the continent, in his efforts to find a home for his houseless brotherhood, Dom. Augustine tried the hospitable shores of England, where so many of his countrymen had succeeded in obtaining refuge. He had the good fortune to establish at Staple-hill, a house of Trappistines. He likewise sent thirty monks to lay a foundation in Kentucky, in America. He quitted Altona in the spring of 1801, and with the remaining members of the community, returned to Valsainte, after an absence of three years. How many privations, and anxieties, and disappointments, and hardships, had he endured, since he went forth an outcast from its walls! But France was the birthplace of the Order; there it grew, and strengthened, and flourished; and there, beyond any other country, did its members wish to be established. The older members of the community, who survived their hardships, and who recollected the old convent of La Trappe, and loved it, as every heart will love the place, where it has learned the first lessons of knowledge and piety, cherished this desire, and wished more than others to see it realized.

Coming from Spain, whither he had gone to visit the house of his Order in Catalonia, the Abbot Augustine passed through Paris, and, at some risk to himself, being

obnoxious to the government, both as a religious and a refugee, determined to ascertain whether there was any likelihood of restoring the Order in his own country. Bonaparte was not an enemy to the religious institute, except where and when it interfered with his own power. "He thought," to use his own words, "that monasteries afforded a secure and tranquil asylum, to many for whom the world was not suited, or who were not suited for the world;" and following the advice of his uncle Cardinal Fesch, he provided a home for them in France. This gleam of sunshine was, however, but the harbinger of the storm. Bonaparte quarrelled with the Pope, and to make sure of the religious Orders, tendered to them the oath of allegiance. The Cistercians of Cervara, at first took it in 1810, but the abbot ordered them to retract it as speedily and as publicly as possible. This was in the year 1811. He who could treat with indignity the successor of St. Peter, was not the man to have his will opposed, or his policy frustrated by a Cistercian monk. Indeed the whole earth seemed silent before a master, who could say: "My subjects are sixty millions; I have from eight to nine hundred thousand soldiers; and a hundred thousand cavalry. The Romans even, never had such forces as these."

Dom. Augustine had not been one of the last to penetrate into the prison of the Pontiff, and attest at the feet of the venerable and holy captive, his inviolable attachment to the Vicar of Jesus Christ. Napoleon suspected the proceedings of Dom. Augustine, and ordered him to be arrested, and the Abbey of Valsainte dissolved. The abbot was taken prisoner as he was going on board a vessel at Bordeaux, for America; but escaped by a mistake of the police. He made his way through France and Switzerland, procured a Russian passport, and got safe to Riga, in company with the Chevalier de la Grange, who escorted the abbot on his journey, and afterwards became

a member of the Order. In 1812, Valsainte, by the command of Bonaparte, was abandoned by the religious, who received every attention their circumstances would admit of, from the government of Fribourg, which had not the power to resist the tyranny of him who ruled at that period, the destinies of France. It is related that this despot, comparing his victories over kings with the invincible resistance which he experienced from the aged and venerable Pontiff, exclaimed: "Alexander could call himself the son of Jupiter, without fear of contradiction. But I behold in this age, a priest more powerful than I am; for he reigns over minds, whilst I reign over matter only. Priests take care of the living soul, and throw to me the dead body."

"From Riga Dom. Augustine proceeded to England, thence to Martinique, and afterwards to the United States, where he gathered together the scattered members of the Order, some of whom had sailed from Bordeaux at the time that he was taken prisoner.

"But quiet times came on. The eagle of France was struck down. He who had so oft led on that eagle to victory,—who had so haughtily controlled the destinies of Europe, was an exile upon a barren rock in the wide Atlantic; and the Cistercian once more returned to his native land."

On the 21st of August, 1814, twenty-five religious reentered the abbey of Darfeld,—near Munster, in Westphalia,—which was the first abbey of Cistercians reestablished in the French Empire. They put on the religious habit and sung a Te Deum for this joyful event.

Dom. Eugene had maintained, during a period of three years, both the male and female members of his order, dispersed in various parts of Westphalia, in the regular practice of their duties. During the times of persecution, he had visited the Sovereign Pontiff in his prison at Fontainebleaux, and the Cardinals who shared in his

exile. From the conversations which he had with Pius VII. and his illustrious council, he felt the impression, that the reform of Val-sainte, hitherto practised at Darfeld, as well as throughout the Cistercian Order, appeared too severe; and that the constitutions of Abbé Rancé would be more pleasing;—because they had in their favour the experience of a hundred and fifty years,—and the approbation of many Popes. He sacrificed his own opinion to that which he believed to be the will of his superiors. No one had been a greater champion of the austerity of Val-sainte than himself. He now assembled his brethren, and stated to them the reasons which had produced in him a change of sentiments; still declaring his admiration of the zeal and virtue of Dom. Augustine. He then exhorted them to be content with the rules of De Rancé. This fact will explain why many Cistercian houses follow the constitutions of De Rancé, at the present day. We have already stated the differences between the constitutions of La Trappe and Val-sainte. The two chief points were these:—a collation allowed by De Rancé on fast days; and the reduction of manual labour from six hours per day to three.

When Dom. Augustine heard that peace was restored to France, he hastened home from America. Dom. Eugene was already in the market for the repurchase of La Trappe; but, when he heard of the arrival of Dom. Augustine, out of respect for the father who had received his vows, and who was the most ancient abbot of the Order, he made over to him the fruit of his negotiations, and likewise the subscription which he had opened for the re-establishment of that abbey. Dom. Eugene sought for another foundation, and found one, through the favour of his friends, at Port-du-Salut, near Laval, in the diocese of Angèrs. It was occupied by a colony from Darfeld, the 21st of Feb., 1815, and erected into an abbey by Pius VII. the following year. The brethren brought with them from Darfeld the

rule of Abbé Rancé. Hence, it was the first in France after the Revolution which adhered to the original observance of the monastery of La Trappe. A short time afterwards, by a special brief of the same Pontiff, who had raised it to the dignity of an abbey, it was exempted, together with Darfeld, from the jurisdiction of Dom. Augustine.

After Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo, Dom. Augustine completed the purchase of La Trappe for 70,000 francs, or nearly £3000. The community of the Holy Valley were recalled from Switzerland to commence again the monastery of their early days, and which was to possess all the privileges granted by Pius VI. to its substitute in Fribourg. Nothing exists of the La Trappe of De Rancé, save the cincture of forest trees, and the purple hills which surround the monastery; the pools which stretch their sheets of water into the woods of Perche; the abbatial lodge built by De Rancé, and a few fragments of walls. All which now strikes the stranger, on his approach, with a sensation of astonishment, is a new creation since 1815.

Dom. Augustine had hoped that, after all his solicitudes, dangers, and fatigues, he would have been permitted to spend his old age in the bosom of his family; and, in the evening of life, would have enjoyed the happiness of seeing his children assembled around him to receive his last benediction. No less than ten monasteries acknowledged him for their parent. But God had decreed otherwise for the greater trial and perfection of his servant, whom he permitted to die in disgrace.

The complaints of his adversaries had been repeated, magnified, and carried to the supreme tribunal of the Holy See. Even persons of respectability re-echoed the most stupid accusations against him. His faith, his obedience to the Church, his morality, were all made points of attack. Indulgent, it was said, towards himself, he was severe to others. He was pronounced a rash hot-head,

whose extravagancies were calculated to embroil both Church and state. Leo XII., of pious memory, saw it was time to interpose. He wrote to the accused an order with his own hand to appear at Rome. Dom. Augustine commenced his journey immediately, in the month of July, 1825.

Thus, at the age of seventy-two, after leading the penitential life of a Cistercian monk forty-six years; after spending thirty years in all kinds of labour, trials, persecutions, perils by sea and by land, he is cited before the supreme Pontiff as a disturber of the peace of the Church, and compelled to justify a life which had been entirely consecrated to the honour and glory of God. When at Rome, his accusers were ashamed to pursue their accusations; and the gross calumnies which were intended to destroy his reputation fell to the ground, without the shadow of a proof. The archbishop of Ancyra, the secretary of the congregation of bishops and regulars, drew up a statement which exonerates Dom. Augustine from the absurd charges which had been scandalously heaped upon him, and which treats his character with great justice, testifying especially to his simplicity, charity, love of mortification and regularity. This report was drawn out about a year after Dom. Augustine had been in Rome. The holy Father treated the accused with great kindness; appointed him lodgings in the abbey of St. Bernard of Thermes; and allowed him a pension for his maintenance. He likewise permitted him to retain his authority over the houses of his order.

In the year 1826, during the vacations at Rome, the venerable abbot went to Naples, and was introduced to the king, with whom he had a conversation about the establishment of a Cistercian convent in his dominions. But this journey considerably augmented his already weak state of health. On his return, he paid a visit to Mount Cassino, where he was seized with a dangerous illness, which he believed to be his last. He derived

great consolation from the thought that he was about to die at the feet of the great Legislator of western monasticism, and of his sister, Scholastica,—whose institutions, during a long life, he had so zealously propagated. When he believed his last hour was drawing nigh, he was carried by request into the church. There he drew up a circular, which contained his last will and testament to his spiritual children; and which he made to be copied and sent to all the houses under his jurisdiction. In the conclusion is the following act of humility and charity: "I beg of you and all in general, and of each one in particular, and as if this letter had been directed to him only, to pardon me whatever I may have done wrong in your regard,—and which may have arisen from my imperfection,—but not from my indifference or want of affection for you.

He recovered, however, from his indisposition, and returned to Rome. There fearing that it would be necessary to soften down some of the austerities of Val-sainte, he wrote to his various communities these instructions: "If you should be obliged to diminish something in the austerities prescribed by St. Benedict and St. Scholastica, endeavour to compensate for these mitigations by greater fidelity, by the more zealous practice of those interior virtues which the rule recommends, and above all, by the observance of the chapters on obedience and humility. Make these the principal subject of your meditation."

Knowing the advantage which was taken, during his absence, to injure his institute, he left Rome in the month of June 1827, with all his business still unsettled. After visiting two or three of his monasteries, he was on his way to the convent of Vaise, near Lyons, when he heard the convent-bell tolling: "It seems," he said to his companion, "to be tolling for death." That evening he was seized with a violent sickness. On the following day he made his confession, and received the last rites of the Church with a faith and piety worthy of his virtuous

life, and with all the joy of the faithful servant, who, having borne the heats and the burden of the day, is about to exchange the momentary tribulations of this passing life, for an eternal weight of glory in heaven. Four days afterwards, on the Feast of St. Stephen, July 16th, 1827, at the break of day, having heard the chaplain recite matins, he breathed his last, and, as the choir were chanting the Te Deum, he gave up his soul into the hands of his Maker.

Dom. Augustine was tall and spare in his person, affable and engaging in his conversation, and full of that pious zeal, which warms and gains over to its own views, all who fall within the sphere of its attraction. He was undoubtedly the chief support of the Cistercian Order during many troublesome and stormy years. He opposed alone the multiplied forces of the French Revolution; preserved from the precipice that holy state, which the demons of anarchy believed they had dashed into the gulph below; and raised up courageous and immortal successors to those shepherds, who were either massacred or dispersed. He alone, amidst the silence of the world, attacked the power of Napoleon, for the honour of the Roman Church, and proved that a monk had more magnanimity than kings, and that the patience of a persecuted religious, could break the power of a despot better than armies and human confederations. Opposing intrigue by charity, indifference by zeal, and contradictions by faith, he formed and maintained in existence, those religious houses, which his adversaries declared to be annihilated; but which now flourish more gloriously than before, to their confusion. By the law of the Lord he judged the Cistercian congregation, and his name continueth for ever; for the glory of holy men remaineth unto their children.

[Vide, Histoire de la Trappe, par M. Cassimir Gaillardin, vol ii. Regulations of Valsainte; and Dublin Review, No. XXXIV.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COLONY OF CISTERCIAN MONKS DESTINED FOR CANADA, DETAINED AT LULLWORTH. THE FOUNDATION OF ST. SUSAN'S LULLWORTH. THE REPORTS CIRCULATED AGAINST IT. THE ACCESSION OF NOVICES. THE DESCRIPTION OF ST. SUSAN'S. RUINS OF BINDEN ABBEY. THE LABOURS OF THE MONKS. THE SETTLEMENT OF THE CISTERCIAN SISTERHOOD AT STAPEHILL. MADAME DE CHABANNES. DEATH OF FATHER MAUR. FATHER ANTHONY SUCCEEDS HIM IN THE PRIORSHIP.

Dom. Augustine entertained for more than twenty years, the design of establishing a Cistercian monastery in Canada, where he heard that the Catholic religion was making great progress. Many obstacles thwarted his intentions; but more especially the difficulty of obtaining permission of the English government, and the little probability there was of securing postulants in a country which had never witnessed the benefits of monastic institutions. Hesitation, however, gave way, when he beheld the favourable reception which the small communities of his religious met with in Spain and other countries; so that in the year 1794, he appointed for this mission to the new world, Father John Baptist, the cellarian, Father Eugene, sub-master of novices, and a lay brother. They set out from the Holy Valley immediately, with the intention of passing through the Low Countries to England, and of sailing from England in a convenient vessel to America. On their arrival at Ghent, they learnt that the Bishop of Antwerp wished to found a house of Cistercian monks, in his diocese; and they were asked to assist him in his project. They simply replied that their destination

was Canada and not Flanders; and that they could not revoke the decision of their superior. The bishop had already written to Dom. Augustine, but had not then received an answer. He believed this a propitious moment for the execution of his design, and entreated Father John Baptist to remain with him, until he should obtain an answer to his petition, which he again urged to Dom. Augustine. The latter gave his consent. Father John Baptist was immediately put in possession of about 300 acres of land, near Westmal, about three leagues from Antwerp.

In April 1794, Dom. Augustine sent a supply of religious to father John Baptist. They were not all, however, to remain in Flanders. He would not renounce his intentions upon Canada. Hence, he appointed Father Arsenius superior at Westmal, and ordered Father John Baptist to proceed with the companions appointed him to London, in which city the small community arrived in 1794. They were received and protected by the English government under the class of French refugees. This favourable reception was shortly followed by another very pleasing event. Proposals were made from high and influential quarters, to provide them with a locality, and with the means of establishing a monastery in England. Father John Baptist hesitated to accept them. He thought they would prove abortive. The brethren he had left at Westmal were, through the ravages of war, dispersed and wandering without a home in Germany. Some disaster, if not of a similar, at least of an equally fatal nature, might happen to their attempts at an establishment in England. The bishop of St. Pol-de-Leon encouraged him in his refusal.

Arrangements, therefore, were immediately made for the voyage of the brothers to Canada. The day when the vessel was to sail arrived; the little colony were praying fervently that God would make known to them his

holy will; when an unforeseen embarrassment prevented their embarkation at the appointed hour, and the vessel weighed anchor and left them behind. This accident determined their destination. It appeared an evident indication that God intended their home to be England. Father John Baptist remembered the injunction of his superior, "if it be possible, effect a foundation in England." On looking over his correspondence, he found the same instructions had been repeated. Hence, he gladly closed with the handsome offers of Thomas Weld, Esq., the noble and generous proprietor of Lullworth Castle, to whom Father John Baptist had been introduced by the Rev. John Milner, Catholic pastor of Winchester, afterwards the illustrious Dr. Milner.

The Rev. Mr. Clinton had just retired from a house which had been recently erected for his residence, in Lullworth park. Of this private and retired dwelling, the little band of Cistercian monks were invited to take possession, until a monastery suitable to the nature of their institute could be constructed. This small house presented to them a very tranquil but a very limited residence. For a short period it was to be their church, their cloister, their dormitory, and their refectory. Few, however, were the holy brotherhood. Father John Baptist the Prior, Father Hyacinthe, Father Dositheus, Brother Bernard, a novice, and two convert brothers; just half the number which marched under the standard of St. Bernard to the foundation of Clairvaux:—a community of six persons, who deemed themselves exceedingly happy with this accommodation, in a land which they were fearful would have expelled them from its shores. Yes, thrice happy were they, after the fatigues, the anxieties, and the distractions of a long journey, to settle down in tranquillity and solitude, in the practice of their holy rule; but with those additional austerities which Dom. Augustine had introduced into the monastery of the Holy

Valley, in Switzerland; and which we have detailed in the preceding chapter.

No sooner was this new light set upon a candlestick (Matt. ch. v. 15.), than it began to shine upon, and to attract the attention of the neighbourhood. Many surmises were afloat about what it could be; many strange conjectures were hazarded; and many impertinent questions were asked. The religious, dwelling in a foreign land, the language of which they could not speak, and with a faith hostile to their own, were naturally timid, and anxious to prevent any misrepresentations of their intentions in this settlement upon English soil. Hence, they published in the local newspapers their object in accepting the hospitality of Mr. Weld, and residing on his domain. "We have been asked," say they, "who we are, and whence we come? Our answer is short and simple. We are Cistercian monks from the abbey of La Trappe in France. We have come to England to obtain an abode, in which we may dwell in peace, silence, and solitude. This is the whole of our design. We have no aim,—no wish, beyond this quiet residence. If this be denied us, we have a mission to Canada, to seek in the forests and uncultivated districts of that remote country, the home from which we shall be excluded in England. There we shall not cease to pray for the welfare of the government which will throw around us the shield of its protection."

Rumour, with its hundred tongues, was silenced by this brief and candid statement of their purpose. Many strangers were prompted by curiosity to visit their humble dwelling, and to examine the mode of life practised by these inhabitants of solitude and quietness. And, generally speaking, they made the same honest declaration which the Protestant authoress of the elegant "Tour to Alet and the Grande Chartreuse," did in her visit to the mother house. "I believe," she says, "that very few, even among

Protestants, have visited La Trappe without being struck with the heavenly countenances of these recluses, and with the truly angelic discourse which flows from their lips, as from a fountain of living water. It is impossible to describe the gravity, benignity, peace, and love, visible in most of their aspects; or the humility, yet self-possessed politeness and attention to their manners. When they are asked why they choose this seclusion, their answer is uniform, 'To glorify God, to repent of our sins, and to pray for the unhappy world which prays not for itself.'"

The year after their entrance into Mr. Clinton's modest dwelling, they were cheered by the accession of three promising novices, Anne, Nicolas, Charles Saulnier de Beauregard, doctor of Sorbonne. Whilst in exile with the clergy of his native land, and residing in London, where he was forecasting the plans of his future life, he heard of the establishment of the Cistercian monastery at Lullworth; and, in the summer of 1795, joined the infant community with all the fervour and determination, with all the strength of mind and body which signalized our forefathers in the desert of Citeaux. He was thirty-one years of age when he put on the coarse habit of a Cistercian monk, submitted to long and painful fasts upon meagre diet, bent down his mind, which hitherto had been occupied in the pleasing pursuit of polite literature, to the more humble studies of plain chant, and the regulations of his institute; and applied, for the first time, his hands to hard labour, and the drudgery of the meanest domestic employment.

Nicholas Rousselin, an ecclesiastical student and French refugee, commenced also his noviceship the same year. Whilst residing in Jersey, he heard of the colony of Cistercian monks planted at Lullworth, and was persuaded by a companion to join them. He became the pious and amiable Father Palemon, many years the exemplary chaplain and pastor of Stapehill. These two excellent novices had for their associate Francis Hawkins of Wardour, who be-

came Father Stephen, and who is still in a green old age in his eighty-third year, in the Abbey of Mount St. Bernard, Leicestershire—the only survivor of the first three novices who commenced their life of penance at Lullworth.

In March, 1796, the community entered their new monastery, which had occupied nearly two years in the erection, situated about half a mile south-east of Lullworth castle, and about equal distance from the sea-coast. This monastery, though small in dimensions, yet contained all the accommodation requisite for the perfection of a monastic life. Its style of architecture was plain early English. The cloisters surrounded the quadrangle of the burial-ground, that the open grave, which is always renewed when one of the brotherhood is buried, might be constantly present to the contemplation of the religious whose chief object is to prepare themselves for a happy death. It was dedicated to God under the patronage of St. Susan. The situation was admirably calculated for prayer, meditation, and heavenly stillness. It stood in the midst of a valley, shut in by gentle sloping hills, crowned with thriving plantations. Nothing broke the solemn silence which reigned through this lovely vale but the convent bell,* and the whispering of the playful waves on the adjacent shore. [Vide, Maule's English Counties delineated, —Dorset, West Lullworth.] Even the winds of heaven were restrained from visiting these sacred shades of retirement; for the Down stood up as a barrier against their fury.

* "Ave Maria! bless'd be the hour,
The time, the clime, the spot where I so oft
Have felt that moment, in its fullest power,
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft;
While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
On the faint dying day;—hymn stole aloft
And not a breath crept thro' the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seem'd stirr'd with prayer."

Father John Baptist, in the description which he gave of the situation to Dom. Augustine, says, "The temperature is mild, the air serene. Winter continues about fifteen days. Spring-time is perpetual. We know not the names of any diseases here. Medicines and physicians are absolutely strangers." What a beautiful shelter was thus afforded, "to those who were better than the world in their youth, or weary of it in their age; the wise as well as the timid and the gentle, might fly to this Goshen of God, which enjoyed its own light and calm amidst darkness and storms."

How appropriately might the instructions of the Abbé Rancé have been addressed to this filiation from his monastery, to this rising community, emulating and surpassing the austerities of the mother house. "Remember," he says, "you are now, with regard to the world, as if it were not. You have blotted it from your memory; it has likewise ignored you. You know not what passes in it. Even its most important events and revolutions reach you not. You never think of it, except to deplore before God its multiplied miseries; and the names of those who rule over it would be unknown to you, if you did not learn them from the prayers which you address to the Almighty for the preservation of their persons. The pleasures, the honours, the vanities, which the admirers of the world fondly cherish in their hearts, you have nobly trampled under your feet."

That which gave to this locality a peculiar charm in the eyes of the brotherhood, and rendered it twofold endearing, was its vicinity to the ruins of Bindon Abbey, a Cistercian house, founded in 1172 by Robert de Newburgh, and Maud his wife, and which perished with the lesser monasteries in the barbarous reign of Henry VIII. The generous proprietor of Lullworth intended at a later period, if death had not forestalled his design, to rebuild these ruins, and present to the monks the abbey restored

to its primitive beauty and original destination. Hence, their new monastery appeared to be the resuscitation of the Cistercian Order, in its once favourite land, the Island of Albion. It thus took to itself "a quiet nook and valley, and gladdened the soul of the labourer by its constant and cheerful bells."

As it was not the intention of the brotherhood to live in idleness, or trespass upon the bounty of their patron more than was absolutely necessary, the farm called the sea-farm from its contiguity to the shore, was made over to their management. We shall not be surprised to learn, when we reflect that the superiors were all foreigners, who knew nothing of the agricultural system in England, and still less of the peculiar tact required by the nature of this farm, that it proved a failure. In place of this, Mr. Weld substituted the milk of ten cows with their pasturage and fodder, several pieces of land for garden purposes, and £300 per annum. He likewise kept the buildings of the monastery in repair, and stood responsible for all kinds of rates that were levied upon the establishment. The community afterwards rented between twenty and thirty acres of ground. Several tracts of waste or common were given to them for cultivation; so that they always kept up their fold-yard, and the exercise of husbandry. Much, indeed, and heavy manual labour had these sons of penance to perform. Whenever a storm arose at sea, they went to gather with difficulty, and sometimes with danger, the weed warech, for the purposes of manure. Part of the waste land which had been given them required draining. This was heavy work for feeble bodies, and hands which had known no toil during youth. Roads for the convenience of the monastery had to be constructed; and the material had to be brought from a distant chalk hill. These were no slight trials for the virtues of patience and obedience; yet they were always encountered by cheerful and silent workmen.

In June, 1796, Father Antony made his profession; and the two other novices at the termination of their year's novitiate. Also this year, Father Arsenius, with two companions, were sent by their abbot, Dom. Augustine, to augment the number of the infant community. Father Arsenius, though he had been superior at the monastery of Westmal, now placed himself as a simple religious at the disposal of Father John Baptist. The testimony which Father Arsène gave of the truly religious spirit he found in St. Susan's, Lullworth, is very pleasing. "Peace, contentment, friendship, and charity reign," he says, "amongst us. Our diminutive solitude is a little paradise. Each one goes to the discharge of his duty with a good heart, with joy and affection. There is not one of my brethren who does not put me to the blush by the warmth of his fervour. This is to me a living sermon, from which I ought to derive continual profit; but which, unfortunately, I do not turn to the best account."

In the year 1800, Dom. Augustine obtained permission from the English government for some of his Cistercian sisters to pass through London on their way to Canada. In 1801, the Rev. Mother, Madame de Chabannes, arrived with a small community in London. They were received and treated upon the same terms as the exiled clergy of France. These good nuns had been cruelly tossed, ever since the year 1793, upon the waves of an uncertainty, by a warfare which devastated the whole of the continent of Europe. They had been driven from Switzerland, Austria, Russia, Poland, and Germany. Now, a peaceful home was to reward their fidelity to their Institute, and their heroic patience, under the severest trials and privations. The influential Catholics of London would not allow these ladies to depart for Canada; and Lord Arundel, emulating the generosity of Mr. Weld, presented to them a residence at Stapehill, which they immediately accepted. It is still,

after the lapse of half a century, the tranquil asylum of the Cistercian sisterhood.

In 1818, the convent became the prey of a violent conflagration, which threatened its total destruction, when the Rev. Mother obliged her sisters to fly to the church to beseech Jesus Christ to become their Protector in so great a peril. There were no male servants, no workmen about to assist in quenching the raging element. The Rev. Mother advanced confidently towards the fire, took from her bosom a reliquary containing a portion of the true cross, and threw it into the flames. They were immediately extinguished. On the following day, the reliquary was found amongst the smouldering ashes perfectly unscathed and uninjured. Father Andrew, the present pastor of Stapehill, has built a beautiful conventual church, both for the use of the nuns and for the neighbouring congregation. It was solemnly consecrated and opened for divine service in the summer of last year, 1851, by the bishop of Clifton.*

* "After the Order of Citeaux," says Manriquez, "had extended its branches even to the territories of barbarous nations, God did not wish that the female sex, whose natural piety seemed better adapted than that of men for the glorious deeds of our holy Institute, should be deprived of the excellent fruits of this paradise. And as He knows how to touch efficaciously, and to dispose sweetly the souls of His elect by a particular stroke of His providence, He animated in a lively manner the hearts of so many virgins, that, in a short time, the forests of France, Spain, Germany, and Italy, became no longer the hiding-place of wild beasts, but the habitations of religious women; who, under the white habit of the Cistercian family, represented lilies planted in the sterile valley of the world.....But that which astonishes me the most, and is the object of my admiration, is, that these fervent ones of the tender sex, appearing as so many fragile flowers, should have been enabled to resist the storms of persecution, and the burden of continual labour; that they should have succumbed neither to flattery nor temptation; and that not all the power of the infernal regions should have been able to turn them from their good resolutions."—Lilia Cisterciі, lib. i. dist. 1.

Madame Rosalie Chabannes was born in Gascogny, in 1769, of

At the commencement of Stapehill convent, Father Antony was appointed confessor to the community. So much satisfaction did he give by his sanctity and sound instruction, that he was solicited to accept the office of Confessor Extraordinary to several communities of ladies. The monastery of Lullworth was a house of retreat into which the missionary priest would sometimes retire for awhile to breathe the pure air of heaven, and replenish his soul with fresh fervour for his arduous duties. Many postulants presented themselves for admission; but few were permitted to enter their noviceship, and still fewer persevered to their profession.

In 1808, the present venerable abbot of Mount St. Bernard, Leicestershire, Father Bernard, then Mr. John Palmer, wished to become a lay brother. He was in the 26th year of his age; and had been a convert to the

rich and noble parents. Her brilliant talents and superior education, would have enabled her to shine as the ornament and the admiration of the highest sphere of society, had not early predilection for the peace and solitude of the cloister withdrawn her entirely from the world. She became a novice in the Cistercian Convent of St. Antony in Paris, and made her profession in 1787. During the eventful period of the great Revolution, this convent was suppressed, and the nuns were cast into prison, from which they daily expected to be led forth to martyrdom. On the death of Robespierre, they were set at liberty. Madame Chabannes joined Dom. Augustine at his new convent in Fribourg, under the name of Sister Mary Augustine; and she might, from the services she rendered him, be justly termed his eldest daughter. She shared with him in his exile from the Holy Valley; and, after long peregrinations into Russia, Prussia, &c., arrived in England, and first settled at Hammersmith (1800) with a small community of sisters, which Dom. Augustine committed to her charge. From Hammersmith this sisterhood retired to Burton, in Dorsetshire; and thence to Stapehill in 1802, which convent she continued to govern until her death, June 13th, 1814, aged 76, and the fifty-seventh year of her religious profession.

Stapehill Convent was subject to Dom. Augustine until the year 1824; when the severity of the rule was mitigated, and the convent placed by Leo XII. under the immediate jurisdiction of Bishop Collingridge.

Catholic faith about two years. The community, at this period, consisted of twelve choir religious, and twelve convert brethren. Bishop Collingridge and his patron, Mr. Weld, persuaded him to join the choir novices. He obeyed their suggestion, and made his profession on the Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, 1810, contrary to the expectation of many who doubted of his perseverance.

Death had already paid his visits to the happy valley of St. Susan's, Lullworth. But he met with a calm and cheerful welcome. For they who have their eyes constantly fixed upon the grave, cannot, at the last hour, be new acquaintances with death. Father Mary Bernard, who had succeeded Father John Baptist, had gone to receive the recompense of his labours. A simple cross of wood marked in the quiet churchyard, the spot were his body reposed,—appareled in his monastic dress, with his white cowl,—the badge of his sacred profession, around him. Other superiors had succeeded. And now Father Maur was stretched upon his death-bed. He selected Father Antony for his successor; and expressed to him his solicitude at the small increase of the community, since the monastery had been established. A few moments before he breathed his last, as if some vista of brighter prospects had been opened to him, he said to the pious brotherhood gathered round him to receive his last blessing: "My children, have confidence in the God whom you serve. He knows your wants. In leaving you on earth, I do not abandon you. For, when I shall stand before God's throne, I will beseech Him—I will conjure Him to remember you, and to give an increase to your noviciate. By this sign will you know if the Lord has had mercy upon me." And he who had walked before God all his days, slept with his fathers. And true were the words of the good man's promise. For more novices commenced their religious career after his happy death,

than had been received into the monastery during many previous years.

Father Antony had already discharged every responsible office in the monastery but that of prior, with complete satisfaction to his brethren. Hence, they warmly expressed their approbation of the choice which Father Maur had made of him to be his successor. Neither were they disappointed in the expectations they had formed of his prudence and ability to preside over their little flock. A zealous lover of his holy institute, he was firm in requiring the observance of the rule; but this firmness, to render it more effective, he concealed under the amiable aspect of mildness and affability. He soon gained the hearts and affections of all who knew him. "Men of the world, who had occasion to see him, admired in him a profound learning, a delicate tact, an exquisite urbanity, a great knowledge of the world, a lively wit,—happy sallies, all the charms of a perfect education, and in the best society, without, however, being able for a single instant to overlook the religious character; so faithful was he to the seemliness and the virtues of his profession."

[Vide, "Vie du R. P. D. Antoine," &c. Paris, 1840. "Les Trappistes ou l'Ordre de Citeaux au XIXe Siècle." Much is borrowed from living witnesses. See likewise a brief Memoir of Father Antony, in the Catholic Magazine, June, 1839.]

CHAPTER X.

LULLWORTH CASTLE. ROYAL VISITS. MR. THOMAS WELD'S EDUCATION, MARRIAGE, AND FAMILY; HIS BENEVOLENCE, PIETY, CHARACTER AND DEATH.

We commence this chapter with the year which concluded the preceding one—the year 1810, memorable to the monastery by the death of its benevolent and noble-minded patron, Mr. Weld. It would be an unpardonable discourtesy to speak of the Cistercian house established upon his demesne, and not to say a word in testimony of respect, about the worthy donor and his amiable family.

"Lullworth Castle is situated in the county of Dorset, about a mile and a half from the sea. It was erected between the years 1588 and 1609, by Henry, eldest son of Thomas, first Viscount Howard of Bindon, and grandson of Thomas, third Duke of Norfolk, and whose mother was Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Sir Roger Newburgh, of East Lullworth. The castle having been injured in the civil war, a new arrangement was given to part of the interior, after the purchase of the estate by Humphrey Weld, Esq., 1641. In dimension the castle is an exact cube of eighty feet, having a round tower at each angle, thirty feet in diameter, and rising sixteen feet above the walls of the centre, which are embattled, and are six feet in thickness. The mansion has three stories, but the towers four, exclusive of the offices in the basement. The principal front is towards the east. It has repeatedly been honoured by the visits of royalty. King James I, was entertained here in 1615. In the year 1665, during

the plague of London, King Charles II, attended by the Dukes of York and Monmouth, made a short stay at Lullworth Castle. In 1789, King George the Third, together with the Queen and the three elder princesses, came by sea from Weymouth, and took up their residence here for a few weeks." The moment the royal family entered the grand saloon, Mr. Weld touched a beautiful organ, and sung with his children, in full harmonious chorus, the national anthem:—God save the King. The effect was impressive, and reached the heart of the monarch, who himself had been blessed with a numerous family of thirteen children; and he remained united in friendship to Mr. Weld, as long as this gentleman lived.

"In 1791, the same royal party repeated their visit by land, and spent several hours at the castle. In 1792, their majesties, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, four of the princesses, and other members of the royal family, paid a third visit to Lullworth Castle. The windows command a fine view of the sea, from the opening between the hills, and from the top of the castle is an extensive prospect to the northward and eastward." [England's Topography, by Thomas Moule, Dorset, East Lullworth.]

"Thomas Weld Esq., lineal descendant from the very ancient and highly respectable Catholic family of Lullworth, lost his father when young, and was sent by his pious mother to receive his education at St. Omer's, in Flanders. There he had resolved to enter some religious Order; but his elder brother Edward, dying without issue,* the family estates devolved upon Thomas, who, by the advice of his friends, married Mary, the daughter of Sir Thomas Stanley, of Alderley, Cheshire. God blessed him with a family of thirteen children, seven sons, and six daughters. Thomas the eldest, afterwards became Cardinal Weld; Edward died in his twenty-first year, at Stoneyhurst

[* Note, Edward's widow became the famous Mrs. Fitzherbert.]

College, in 1796; John became a priest and a professed member of the Society of Jesus, and died whilst president of the above mentioned college. The four remaining brothers became heads of families; Joseph, Esq., of Pilewell, in Hampshire, now of Lullworth; Humphrey of Chidiock, in Dorsetshire; James of Britwell, in Oxfordshire; and George of Leagrim Hall, Lancashire. Miss Clare and Miss Mary, the eldest and the youngest daughters, are now professed religious in the Convento f Westbury. Catherine married Lord Stourton; Teresa, Mr. Vaughan; and Elizabeth, Mr. Bodenham. One daughter died unmarried.

"So numerous and so virtuous a family pronounces, in terms more eloquent than the tongue can utter, or the pen can write, the eulogium of the parents. 'For, the glory of a man is from the honour of his father; for God hath made the father honourable to the children; and seeking the judgment of the mother hath confirmed it upon her offspring.' Mr. Weld had at his command a noble fortune; and he employed it in deeds of benevolence, with a generosity which will redound to his eternal honour. He gave the house of Stoneyhurst, which he had inherited from the Sherbourne family, together with thirty acres of land, to the Jesuits, on their expulsion from Liège, in Belgium. He assisted many religious communities with liberal donations, paid the salaries of several missionary priests, contributed largely to the erection of Catholic chapels, entirely supported the poor Clares at Britwell, in Oxfordshire, besides the maintenance of the Cistercian monastery on his patrimonial estate. But who shall relate his private charities, save the God alone who saw them, and who will publish them to his honour at the last day? It was not with a niggardly hand he dealt out his alms to the poor. He advanced liberally,—when the distress appeared evident,—sums which would effectually confer relief. He kept a generous—nay, a

princely table. The poor who brought eggs to the castle, besides the usual price in money, carried back their baskets full of victuals for their clamorous families. He supplied the workhouse every day with beer and soup; and it is confidently asserted by competent witnesses, that half of his income was dispensed in various kinds of charity.

"His attention to his religious duties was not less remarkable and exemplary. His piety was simple but fervent. He seems to have retained a portion of the monastic spirit which he had imbibed during his education in Flanders. He rose every morning at six o'clock, made an hour's meditation before mass, which he heard every day, and some days twice, and communicated on Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. He recited the whole of the canonical office, as if he had been in sacred orders every day. The household of the castle were summoned every morning by toll of bell to the holy sacrifice of the mass. At ten o'clock he usually went out with his hedgehook to look after his plantations and the various improvements which were in operation upon his estate. At two o'clock he returned for none and vespers. At four he dined. At six complin, with spiritual reading from Butler's Lives of the Saints, or some other pious book, At half past eight, his chaplain recited night prayers, at which the domestics were required to attend. His family afterwards accompanied him to his own room, to unite with him in the recital of the rosary. Nine was the usual hour for supper; and at ten he generally retired to rest. He had in St. Susan's monastery a bed-room, a sitting-room, and a little oratory, from which he could join in the services of the Church. Besides his annual retreat, he spent the whole of Holy Week in the monastery—except a few years before death, in which he spent this week with the poor Clares at Britwell—assisted in the

choir at all the offices, and partook in the refectory of the ordinary refreshment.

"From his early years, his whole life was a continual preparation for eternity. In his youthful days he was strongly impressed with a sense of the divine presence. His contemporaries in education well remember his uncommon assiduity in all the exercises of religion, his fondness for the splendour of divine worship, his marked attachment to those among his elders, who most promoted piety and devotion. This prevalent inclination in a manner stifled the pleasing and innocent levities of playful youth; he was then considered as a boy of a sedate and serious cast of character; but not on that account was he the less acceptable to his equals: his unalterable evenness of temper, his unassuming modesty, his uniform conduct void of every pretension, endeared him to all; in his youth he was at once both loved and respected. He continued thus to conform himself to the dawn of manhood; religion, its mysteries, its solemnities, its precepts, its practices, and moral duties, were the invariable objects of his pursuits; the holy scriptures and ascetical writings were his regular lectures, his favourite study; he selected his friends and confidents from among those who were most versed in these matters;.....the sight of the heavens, the vicissitude of the seasons, the works of nature, the improvements, the ingenuity, the wonders of art, were to him steps, by which he rose up to the great Creator..... He had learned from St. Paul, "not to be conformable to this world" [Rom. xii. 2.]; he knew, from St. Peter, that to deviate from the path of worldly dissipation would provoke the sons of folly to taunt him with affected admiration "for not concurring in their confusion of luxury," [1 Peter iv. 4.] but he disregarded their sentiments, quietly persevered in his own strict morality, and he formed around him what St. Paul might style a family of Saints, a household in which God was regularly adored,

where profane language and intemperance were equally unknown, where all, more or less, copying the master, wore an air of content, order, mutual agreement, and charity.....It was a charming, though a constant scene, to behold the master of Lullworth rehearsing from the most approved spiritual writers, to his virtuous consort and his attentive children, the wonders of God, the truths of revelation, the mysteries of redemption, the duties, the maxims, of the Gospel: he knew from St. Chrysostom, that the parents' lips are the books, in which children must study and learn their duty to their Creator; he taught them (and he was truly a master in the science,) to hate sin, to flee the corruption of the world, to curb their passions, to love God, to study their religion.

"No man ever more studied, or better comprehended the obligations of his rank, the several duties of a parent, a master, a friend, a gentleman, a Christian. Equally distant from haughtiness and meanness, equally a stranger to minutious scrupulosity, and undiscerning extravagance, equally an enemy to avarice and profusion, he never deemed himself Lord of Lullworth and its appendages. He knew how to be splendid without ostentation, when duty to his sovereign or respect to high rank required it; he knew how to be simple, elegant, and generous in the regular establishment of his household; above all, he knew how to be liberal to the distressed, especially to the virtuous poor; oh! here he feared not to be disavowed by his great Master.

"He would often speak of the fleeting nature, the instability of worldly possessions and enjoyments; he had meditated the images, by which scripture expresses the rapid passage of time and of worldly grandeur; he could compare it to the flight of the eagle, to the path of the arrow; he knew from St. Paul, [1 Cor. vii. 31.] that the figure of this world, like a meteor, quickly disappears, and he would wonder, that its false glare could dazzle so

many poor mortals in its transit. I always found him in a persuasion that his life would be short. He has frequently spoken to me upon this head with the greatest composure; he had familiarized himself with death; he therefore used the world, as if he used it not; he had no value for the artificial distinctions, which separate pilgrim from pilgrim on their progress towards eternity, but he loved to think and speak of the common points, in which they all meet, their common birth, their short duration, and death, which re-unites them all." [A Discourse pronounced at the funeral of the late Thomas Weld, Esq., in the chapel of Lullworth Castle, 1810, by the Rev. C. Plowdon.]

To complete his favourite establishment of Stonyhurst, he went there a few days before the Feast of St. Ignatius, the thirty-first of July, 1810. He arranged everything necessary for the accomplishment of his intention. On the day previous to the feast, he made his confession, as a preparation for his communion the next morning. During the morning of the Feast he appeared uncommonly cheerful, joined the students in their recreation with all the buoyancy of youth. After dinner, in the midst of a lively and animated conversation, death laid his hand upon him, as upon one who was ripe for heaven; and he was forthwith carried to his chamber.

The medical gentleman summoned to his assistance, informed him of his immediate danger, and begged him to settle everything that might be of importance. He replied that he had carefully done everything that was requisite; he had yesterday made a good confession, this morning heard seven masses, received the holy communion with as much consolation as ever he had done in his life. All was ready. He calmly received the rites of the Church, and sunk into unconsciousness from which he never awoke.

He was truly beloved of God and men, whose memory

is in benediction. Many were the prayers which ascended to the throne of Mercy, from the pure lips of orphan children, beseeching the Lord to have compassion on the soul of Thomas Weld, Esq.; many were the widows' tears shed in gratitude over his grave. His corpse was brought from Stonyhurst to Lullworth, and buried in the family vault. Thomas the eldest son, succeeded to his patrimonial estates, and his virtues.

CHAPTER XI.

FATHER ANTONY SOLEMNLY BLESSED THE FIRST ABBOT OF ST. SUSAN'S, LULLWORTH. THE VARIOUS REPORTS IN CIRCULATION ABOUT THE MONASTERY. THE APOSTATE POWER. THE MISCHIEF HE DID. HIS MISERABLE END. LORD SIDMOUTH AND FATHER ANTONY. VISITS OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE TO ST. SUSAN'S. FATHER ANTONY PURCHASES MELLERAY. ORIGIN OF MELLERAY. ARRANGEMENTS WITH MR. WELD. DEPARTURE OF THE BROTHERHOOD FROM ENGLAND. A LAST GLANCE AT ST. SUSAN'S, LULLWORTH.

In the year 1813, Father Antony was solemnly blessed the first Abbot of St. Susan's, Lullworth, by Dr. Poynter, Bishop of London. During the previous years of its existence, St. Susan's had been only a Priory. It was now raised by the Court of Rome into an Abbey.

With this new dignity, Father Antony displayed an increase of zeal and devotion in God's service. And indeed, he stood in need of great confidence in the divine protection; he required the staff of the Shepherd of Israel, to support him beneath the storm that was gathering in black and heavy clouds on the distant horizon. Many were the evil reports circulated against the little community, which, in the tranquil bosom of a lovely valley, seemed beyond the reach of the busy tongues of men. But what is there so remote, which slander does not search out? What is there so sacred which it does not contaminate? Indeed, the more holy, the more secluded the object may be, the greater will be the zest of slander in its villification.

The pious brotherhood were at one time called hypocrites, concealing under the exterior garb of penance, the love of good cheer. Many visitors, on this account, became anxious to examine the kitchen, where they expected to find viands so delicious, as to tempt the palate of a professed gourmand, hidden beneath the cabbages and the turnips, which were ready to be cast into the soup-pan. At another time, they were charged with harbouring a proud heart under a coarse vesture. Their strange dress was too much at variance with the present costume, to be in any degree tolerable. Objections were made against their solemn vows, which were branded by the extremely ignorant, as violations of God's Holy Word. To-day the brethren were forbidden to receive any more novices; to-morrow they were allowed to do so, provided the vows were only for three years. Many thought they treated the brotherhood very mildly and very charitably, when they simply called them fanatics. Others transformed them into French spies, occupied in subtracting the wealth of England, in order to carry it to France. But all these darts would have passed harmlessly over the hills, without even attracting the slightest glance of the community, had they not been followed by the more deadly missiles of an apostate and traitor.

In the year 1815, one of the choir religious, by name Power, from Waterford, who had been professed about three years, and promoted to sub-deaconship, threw off his habit, renounced his religion, and read the abjuration of his faith to a large audience in Blandford parish church. This apostacy is ascribed to the corruption of his morals, whilst sailing to America with Dom. Augustine, for an establishment in Canada. The Captain of the vessel induced this young man to join him in his potations; and when the religious was reprimanded by his superior, he brooked not reproof, but cast off the yoke of obedience. On the arrival of the vessel at Martinique, Power refused

to proceed to Canada; and after remaining some months on the island we have just mentioned, returned to England. He presented himself at the gate of the monastery of Lullworth, professing great sorrow and repentance for his bad and unruly conduct. By the kindness of the abbot, he was permitted to rejoin the community. But after a few months, temptation came again in his way, and he returned to the vomit. The result of this relapse was the denial of his faith. To justify his departure from the abbey, he drew up against his brethren a long list of weighty charges; some containing violations of morality; others, transgressions against the excise duties.

The son of a French emigrant, a very pious youth about nine years of age, was received and educated in the monastery together with some other children. After a short sickness, during which he gave great edification, he died the death of a saint. When Madame de Chabannes, the Rev. Mother of Stapehill, heard of the youth's demise, and of his saintly piety, she expressed a wish to possess a memorial of the devout youth, and requested Father Antony to do her the great favour of asking for the head of the corpse. Her request was complied with. The head was preserved from decomposition, and sent to her. This was a case of murder. A second charge was equally ridiculous. The brethren were allowed to die without any medical assistance. Dr. Stein, of Wareham, replied to the inquiries which were made upon this subject, that the brothers of the monastery were among the number of his best patients. A third calumny stated, that some of the community were shut up in solitary confinement, and left to die of hunger. The magistrates of Dorchester sent some trusty persons to examine this point. They were kindly shown every part of the abbey. They came to a door which was locked. On asking the reason, they were told that a poor idiot was detained in it. This looked suspicious. The key, however, was brought, that

they might examine the matter for themselves. On opening the door, they saw a table, upon which there was a basin of boiled rice, and other food. In one corner sat the deranged brother, who flew upon the strangers immediately, and gave them satisfactory evidence of the state of his mind. These were some of the absurd charges against morality.

Against the excise duties, we will mention the following :—With the waste wax from the candles used in the church, a brother, who had the care of lights, manufactured small rude candles, and small tapers, to be employed instead of matches in carrying lights from lamp to lamp through the church and cloister. This was defrauding government of its revenue.

Now these accusations were calculated to produce a strong impression upon the minds of Protestants in the neighbourhood. Hence, the inhabitants of Blandford petitioned Moreton Pitt, Esq., one of the county members, to call the attention of government to the list of crimes thus preferred against the monks of St. Susan's, Lullworth. The consternation of the innocent community, when these treacherous proceedings of one of its late members were made known to it, may be easily imagined. But no heart did these poisoned shafts of calumny pierce more deeply than that of the excellent abbot, Father Antony. He was summoned to London. There, through the kindness of Lord Clifford and Mr. Weld, he had two interviews with the Prime Minister, Lord Sidmouth. He demanded to be confronted with his accuser, but the dastardly renegade refused to show himself. His hesitation to meet the eye of innocence threw a strong shadow of doubt upon the whole list of charges. Inquiries were made from respectable Protestants, who were in a position to be accurate witnesses,—if the accusations were true, and the answers returned were invariably, No. Lord Clifford, Mr. Weld, and the Bishop of Uzés, had conferences upon the matter

with the Marquise d'Osmond, the French ambassador. When Father Antony desired that the gross and calumnious charges made against himself and community might be disavowed publicly, Lord Sidmouth declared that he had no difficulty in acknowledging them to be entirely false. He pronounced Father Antony an honourable and brave man, and his slanderer a degraded and insignificant wretch; adding, that no notice would be taken of these denunciations, for it was the part of the government to defend the cause of the religious. This, he said, in the public mind would be a sufficient exoneration from guilt.

The traitor, when he heard of this result, was completely disconcerted. The friends who had encouraged his apostacy looked coldly upon him, and refused to promote him to Anglican ordination. He began to be abandoned to silent contempt, when he hastened from the scene of his infamy, and engaged as scrivener on board a merchant vessel. During the voyage, whilst busily writing the awful disclosures of the monastery of Lullworth, he died the death of Judas, and his body was cast into the sea.

Lord Sidmouth took advantage of this commotion, to impose a restriction which the abbot would not accept: the novitiate was to be confined entirely to Frenchmen. The reply of Father Antony was simply, that he could not accede to these terms; for the English were as much his children as the French. Then Lord Sidmouth reminded Father Antony, that the members of his community had been tolerated in the light only of French refugees; and, therefore, he obliged him to promise, that he and his brotherhood would leave England as soon as they could obtain an opening and settlement in France. Thus were the days of St. Susan's, Lullworth, numbered. "To the good man, whatever be his trial, a sanctuary is opened by Christian hope, to which he can always retire. 'If the floods lift up their voice, yea, if they lift up their waves,' he may whisper to himself, with humble but steadfast

faith, 'the Lord is higher and mightier than the voice of many waters, yea, than the waters of the sea; my heart, therefore, is strong, my heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.'"

Father Antony consulted with his friend and patron, Mr. Weld, who consented, with some reluctance, to the translation of the community to France. Great, indeed, had been the pain and anxiety which Mr. Weld's pious family had suffered during the violence and clamour, which were displayed in the adjacent towns and villages, immediately the renegade Power had concocted and published his charges. Now that the lightning and tempest had passed over, it seemed no small trial to part with an institution so long cherished and protected by their beloved parent. The abbot promised on the part of himself and his brethren, that Mr. Thomas Weld, senior, and his heirs, should not only be esteemed the first and principal founders and protectors of the monastery he was about to establish in his native land; but also should have a principal share in the prayers, the holy sacrifice of the mass, and other good works of the community. Masses would be celebrated on the anniversary of their death; and all members of the family would have a mass and private prayers offered for the repose of their souls, immediately their decease should be communicated to the abbey. Signed ✠ Brother Antony, Abbot. June 1st, 1815.

The Princess Charlotte, the idol of the British people, paid two visits to the abbey of St. Susan, Lullworth. The first was in 1814. She had heard—in her annual visits to Weymouth—various edifying relations of the mode of life practised by the Cistercian monks at Lullworth. She listened to them with considerable interest, and felt anxious to see and examine for herself. The first time she came almost incognito; and Father Antony, in opposition to his profound respect for the members of a royal family, and the delicate attention which he had

always shown in his interviews with them, saw himself constrained to give her, an exceedingly kind-hearted and benevolent creature, a reception little in unison with his own feelings. He did not then know that a favour had been granted by Sovereign Pontiffs to all princesses of the reigning family, to enter with their suite and view the interior of monasteries. The princess saw the embarrassment of the good religious, and graciously relieved him by declaring that she highly respected the constitutions of his Order, which had imposed such a restriction, and humbly and modestly sat down in a very plain room—with all that urbanity and open-heartedness which rendered her so popular,—to a frugal collation which she partook of with great cheerfulness. Then walking round the enclosure, and viewing the church, she expressed great satisfaction, and promised another visit in the following year.

She was faithful to her promise. Father Antony had now discovered the privilege which we have mentioned above. The princess, on her arrival, stopped at the threshold of the abbey gate. The abbot with his brethren advanced to meet her. She was informed of her right of admittance, and desired to enter. She obeyed with joy; saying, she was exceedingly honoured in being allowed to enter where woman had never before been admitted. The same privilege was granted to her ladies in attendance. She visited every place worthy of notice; and asked a thousand questions about the most ordinary matters, but which to her were subjects of curiosity. She was particularly pleased with the conversation of the abbot, whose elegance and manners told at once both his birth and education. She took lunch in the guest apartments with much familiarity and condescension. On her departure, she said aloud to General Garth, General Grant, and Captain Digby: she could not see why these religious persons should not be permitted to serve God in the

manner most pleasing to them. Making an apology for the want of her purse, she sent on the following day a donation of ten guineas.

Father Antony, through the interest and favour of the Marquise d'Osmond, petitioned Louis XVIII. for permission, now peace reigned again in his native land, to return to France for the purpose of restoring the Cistercian Order. The prayer of the petition was heard and graciously granted. Melleray and the Grande Chartreuse were the only monasteries left standing after the hurricane of the French Revolution had swept by. The Grande Chartreuse, Father Antony declined on account of its cold and bleak situation. Melleray, he succeeded in purchasing from several parties; and received as a present, a farm attached—from a pious lady, who had bought it for the purpose of again restoring it to the abbey in tranquil times, which were now smiling propitiously.

Melleray, situated in Brittany, near Chateaubriant, in the diocese of Nantes, was a Cistercian abbey, founded in 1145. Two religious from the convent of Ponteron, near Angèrs, were sent by their superior to find an eligible site for a new monastery. They solicited hospitality from the village of Moisdon, and met with an unkind refusal both from pastor and people. Compelled to pass the night in the neighbouring forest, they selected the trunk of a hollow tree for their dormitory. On entering it, they found, to their surprise, a honeycomb, which supplied them with a pleasant evening's repast. This providential circumstance marked the spot of the hollow tree for the site of their new convent, where a house of hospitality would be opened in this inhospitable neighbourhood. The name Meilleraie, or Melleray, preserves to this day the remembrance of the honeycomb, which provided the two religious with a dainty supper.

Mr. Weld entered into an amicable and honourable adjustment with Father Antony for the amelioration of

the property which the community were about to leave at Lullworth. It was with the sum accruing from this adjustment that the abbot was enabled to meet the payment of his new property, and to purchase implements and cattle necessary to stock it. Some portion, also, of the effects of the monastery of St. Susan, the carriage of which would have been too expensive, were disposed of; the rest went to Melleray in a vessel appointed for the luggage.

The community, consisting of nearly sixty persons, with others who had become attached to them, in all sixty-four persons, embarked at Weymouth on the 10th of July, 1817, on board the beautiful government frigate, La Revanche, which had been appointed by the French monarch for their voyage. Captain Pelleport said that this mission did him great honour. He had orders to treat them with every possible kindness, and to provide for all their wants. "Happy," he exclaimed, "I feel myself in being one of the first to prove to you, by my respect, the joy which your entrance into France will everywhere diffuse." A numerous body of persons followed the pious brotherhood to the beach, and testified to them every mark of respect which their grateful hearts could suggest. Many followed them in skiffs some distance to sea, and presented them with bread for their voyage. These demonstrations of gratitude for past kindness and benevolence, and of respect for pure and sublime virtue, made the brotherhood forget the sorrows of the late persecution.

Mr. Thomas Weld, who, in his after life as Cardinal Protector, conferred so many benefits on the Cistercian Order, wished to preserve the house of St. Susan, embosomed in the green and shady dell which had sheltered the brotherhood from 1796 to 1817; but it fell during the following winter. Amidst the mass of ruins, the cloister walls were left standing around the green sward of

the cemetery, in which the bodies of the brethren, who had gone to their reward, lay buried. And they form an appropriate fence for this tranquil spot, where

> "We stand on holy earth,
> And have the dead around us;
> Th' intruding foot of man seldom strays
> To mar the silence of its solitude.
> Yet busy fancy here might love to paint
> The pale shadow of some lingering monk,
> Loathe to depart—and take a fond farewell
> To hallowed walls—the cradle of his bliss
> That knows no term."

Lullworth is the parent-house of six distinct monasteries; Melleray in France, Mount Melleray in Ireland, Mount St. Bernard in England, Our Lady of Gethsemani, and Our Lady of New Melleray in America, and Our Lady of Fontgombaud in France. We owe, therefore, this brief notice, as a tribute of respect to a mother who, exiled from the shores of England, has been blessed during her sojourn in France with so many happy children.*

* The stone on which the arms of the Weld family had been elaborately carved, was taken by the community to France, and placed over the abbey gateway, where it still continues a memorial of pious gratitude.

Mr. Thomas Weld, jun., who made this generous and honourable adjustment with the Cistercian community for the property which they were leaving behind them, was the eldest son of their noble patron and benefactor. He was born on the 22nd of January, 1773, and received a domestic education under the direction of the Rev. Charles Plowdon, S. J. "From the dawn of manhood he cordially concurred in all the good and great deeds of his munificently religious and charitable father. At the age of twenty-three he married a lady of the noble house of Clifford, whose virtues were in perfect accordance with his own. In conjugal life he harmoniously reconciled his religious with his domestic and social duties. In 1815 he became a widower. In 1818 his only daughter married Lord Clifford. Thus released from domestic ties, his leisure and means for charitable purposes were greatly enlarged. He retired to Paris, where, under the direction of Abbé Carron, he

prepared himself for the functions of the priesthood. In 1821 he was ordained priest by the Archbishop of Paris. His missionary labours commenced at Chelsea under the direction of Abbé Voyaux de Franous.

"On the sixth of August he received episcopal consecration, and was appointed coadjutor to Dr. McDonald, Bishop of Upper Canada; an appointment ill suited to his delicate constitution. The remonstrances of his family, and the advice of physicians, delayed his departure to America. In the mean time, he retired to the convent of Hammersmith, and devoted himself to the spiritual direction of that edifying community. The re-establishment of the health of his beloved daughter demanding a more genial climate, he accompanied her to the Holy City; where, on the 15th of March, 1830, he was invested by Pius VIII. with the dignity of Cardinal.

"His elevation to the cardinalate was hailed with joy by his countrymen, as a national event; as the commencement of a friendly intercourse between England and Rome. The religious affairs of America, India, and Australia seemed to be entrusted to his special guardianship; and he toiled with unremitting assiduity for their amicable adjustment. But his health became unequal to the labour of his charity, and he expired on the 10th of April, 1837, crowned with honour, dignity, and virtue."—(From Dr. Wiseman's Funeral Oration.)

CHAPTER XII.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE BROTHERHOOD IN FRANCE. ENTRANCE INTO MELLERAY. INSTALLATION SPEECH OF FATHER ANTONY. RENEWAL OF VOWS. INCREASE OF THE COMMUNITY. FATHER ANTONY APPOINTED VISITOR GENERAL. REPORT FOUNDED UPON HIS VISITATION.

On the 20th of July, this peaceful band of Cistercian monks landed on the shores of France. They were welcomed with every demonstration of joy and respect. They were not, as in other localities of the kingdom, the mere wreck of former communities, individuals scattered by the rude hand of persecution, reassembling from their various retreats, and meeting either accidentally or by appointment, to take possession of the ruins which, a few years previously, had constituted a magnificent abbey, and wait in sad suspense, the course of years for the privileges of existence and augmentation ; no, they presented, at once, a flourishing brotherhood of fifty-nine persons, capable, from the first day of their settlement, of discharging all the duties and exercises of the monastic state.

Father Antony, on their arrival at Nantes, conducted them to the Hotel-Dieu, where preparations had been made for their reception. The pious sisterhood of that establishment, exercised with great cheerfulness all the rights of hospitality towards the religious pilgrims. The abbot, at the head of his brethren, left Nantes on the 24th of July, 1817, to proceed on his journey to Melleray. When the report reached Nort, a village about three leagues from the abbey, that vessels from the port of

Nantes were bringing back, after an exile of twenty-eight years, the children of St. Bernard to dwell in the land of their fathers, in an ancient monastery of that neighbourhood, the bells of the Church were rung, and the inhabitants gathered together, then formed in procession, and with their curate at their head, marched to meet the Cistercian colony, congratulate them on their re-entrance into France, and testify the joy they experienced in this passing visit to their parish. The curate then conducted the religious to the church, where the Te Deum was sung with great solemnity. After this testimony of gratitude, the abbot, undistinguished from his brethren, except by his wooden pectoral cross, commenced the journey on foot to Melleray. At the extremity of the commune, the mayor of Nort provided the community with a plain and frugal repast. The clergy and the most respectable persons of the district assembled to tender their felicitations, express their happiness in receiving amongst them so many fervent Christians and powerful auxiliaries to their holy faith. The work-folk along the road suspended their labours, and an immense crowd of peasants accompanied the travellers to their abbey, pronouncing upon them every kind of benediction their simple minds could suggest.

The solemn installation of the religious in their new residence, took place on the 7th of August, 1817, about a month after they had weighed anchor, and bidden adieu to the shores of England. Many persons from Nantes and the environs were desirous of being present on the occasion. The clergy of the above named city, and the adjacent country, the public functionaries, the sub-prefect of Châteaubriant, the officers of the national guard and of the line, had all gathered together at Melleray, to testify to those who were the objects of this imposing ceremony, the respect, the veneration, and the joy with which this unhoped for return filled their hearts.

About ten o'clock in the morning, the Abbé Bodinier, vicar general, accompanied by a solemn deputation of the chapter of St. Peter's Cathedral, Nantes, with thirty curates from the neighbouring parishes, entered the secular church of the monastery, in which Father Antony had assembled his religious. Preceded by a plain cross of wood, the procession advanced and marched gently through the corridors, which, after twenty years of mournful silence again re-echoed with the songs of Sion. The spectacle was one which was well calculated to touch the finest cords of the human heart, and produce those exquisite feelings of subdued gladness which may be felt but not expressed. The spectators admired the halo of cheerfulness and contentment which shone around the countenances of those, who, aliens to the world, had been chastened by the afflictions with which God had permitted the enemy of mankind to visit His holy servants. *

The Abbé Bodinier made, in the name of himself and his brethren, a beautiful address to the religious in the church; to which the Rev. Father returned this feeling and impromptu reply:—

"Rev. and dear Sir.—It is not without an emotion of joy, after leaving those shores which, you so justly designate the land of hospitality, a land which, during a period of twenty-five years, has protected us with an unceasing benevolence, has provided for all our wants—has preserved us in peace, during days of darkness, horror, and confusion—it is not, I repeat, without an emotion of joy, that we find ourselves in the bosom of France, in our own country,—which, though it doomed us to banishment, yet we always loved;—in one, moreover, of its best provinces, which has received us so fervently and so

* The structure of Melleray at this period was not the ancient monastic edifice, which had seen the days of St. Bernard, but a recent erection in the modern style of building.

affectionately;—and in one, too, of those ancient monuments of the faith and piety of our forefathers, which Providence seems to have snatched from the hand of destruction, that levelled with the dust all other sacred asylums of religion and virtue, purposely to prepare for us a peaceful dwelling.

"We bless, then, Rev. Sir, this Providence, admirable in all His works, for having led us by the hand into one of the monasteries of St. Bernard, into one of the houses of Citeaux, once so celebrated for the sanctity of its founders, and the piety of its early children; yes, we pride ourselves upon being Cistercians; upon our being children of the great St. Bernard; upon our associating with that family, which shone forth so eminently in the Church, as long as it continued to tread in the footsteps of its forefathers.

"Far are we, dear Sir, from meriting the encomium which your kindness has lavished upon us. We present nothing to the astonishment, much less to the admiration of a judge less favourably disposed towards us than you and your respected brethren. Our life appears only extraordinary, when contrasted with the decay of present manners,—the degeneracy of our times. We do but follow at a distance the example which our holy founders have bequeathed us. We are a band of sinners clothed in the garb of penance, weary of the world, of its illusions, and its follies; and deeply sensible of the great truths of religion, anxious to repose in silence and solitude, and to meditate upon those sublime doctrines, which can alone impart to man, in this life, solid consolation, by imparting to him an assurance of happiness in the next. Standing upon the holy mountain,—far away from all turmoil and storms, we feel, by experience, what a felicity it is to serve Him whose yoke is sweet, and whose burden is light. The interests which create so much commotion amongst worldlings,—ambition, avarice, and jealousy, are

banished from our cloisters. We are brethren of the same family, dwelling under the same roof, and linked together by the silken bands of charity. We sing with the Prophet; 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.' [Psalm cxxxii.] It is this religious union, which,—without infringement of that social demarcation so admirable in the state, and traced out by God Himself,—views in all men a family of brothers; all sons of the same Father; all created by the same God, and fashioned according to His image; all redeemed by the blood of His Divine Son, and all destined to the same happiness. Such, in brief, is the basis of the holy state in which we are engaged. We feel how much we are inferior to a profession as angelic as it is sublime; but our miseries do not diminish any of its dignities, since they do not diminish any of our obligations to it.

"One of the principal of these duties, to which, dear Sir, you have been pleased to call our attention, and of which you know perfectly well the extent, is to pray for the salvation of mankind. If we are not commanded with Josue to fight in the plain, if we are not worthy to fulfil the august and responsible functions of the sacred ministry, we are bound, nevertheless, like Moses, to lift up our hands upon the mountain top, and present to Heaven our feeble supplications for both pastor and people. Yes, Rev. Sir, in returning to France, we regard ourselves under the sacred obligation of redoubling our prayers for its safety and prosperity; and no day will pass in which we shall not demand of God, in our august monarch, and in his illustrious house, the preservation of that zeal for religion, that purity of faith, which have so justly conferred upon our princes, the glorious title of eldest sons of the Church, and most Christian Kings. We will beseech God to grant to this diocese in particular, and to France in general, pastors according to His own heart, priests as enlightened and zealous, dear Rev. Sirs,

as yourselves, who are healing the wounds of irreligion and anarchy, and bringing back the happy days of the Church in France.

"We will petition God to disabuse men of every class of the falsehoods of error and impiety; inspire them to embrace, with submission, the sublime truths of a pure and simple faith; move them to reject with horror those erroneous systems, captious sophisms, and pernicious books, which hell has vomited forth in our age to destroy the principles, both of belief and morality. We will supplicate the Most High to plant in the minds of all men this great truth, that religion alone can procure for them a solid happiness in this life, and promise them the assurance of it in the next. In fine, we will endeavour, by the sweet and persuasive voice of example, to lead all within our sphere to a more extensive, and a more cultivated knowledge of God, that, impressed by His love and fear, He may one day vouchsafe to unite us all in His eternal kingdom."

Many eyes were moistened with tears during the delivery of this extempore and warm effusion of the heart; and many prayers ascended to heaven for the preservation of an abbot, so worthy to rule over and direct his pious community.

Before the mass of the Holy Spirit was sung by the Father Abbot, each one of the brothers went to this amiable superior, and renewed his vows in the following impressive words: "My Father, I promise you obedience unto death." The abbot, raising the brother from his knees, embraced him, and said, "And I, my son, promise you eternal life." All went to receive the Holy Communion in the mass; and the imposing service was terminated by the Te Deum. It was thus that the brotherhood, under the conduct of their venerable abbot, Father Antony, took—by prayer, the participation of the Blessed Eucharist, and the spontaneous renewal of their vows—possession of their

solitude, their cloisters, and their farms. "Thus was recognized, in the storm and in the cloud, the power and mercy which hushed the storm into peace, and touched the cloud into light and glory."

The first person who presented himself for admission into the novitiate of Melleray, was a sailor from the frigate, Revanche. He had been captivated, during the voyage, by the peaceful countenances, and holy demeanour of the religious brotherhood; and he formed the resolution of joining (as soon as circumstances would permit) their happy society. For this purpose he raised sufficient funds to secure his discharge from the naval service; and then went directly to the abbey-gate of Melleray, to solicit admission.

Though the community were in possession of an abbey, yet they had many severe trials and difficulties to encounter. The house and the out-buildings were considerably out of repair. The farms were in a still worse condition from the calamities of 1793. Much of the land had been left uncultivated; some had never been broken up and enclosed; and many patches were stony and sterile. Indeed, the whole of the property is situated in that part of the Loire Inférieure, which is called the Siberia of Brittany. It contained about four hundred acres, divided into four parts; three of which were let off to different farmers; and the fourth part about one hundred and ten acres, was cultivated by the brotherhood. Upon this portion of their domain was applied the skill which had been obtained from the improved method of English farming. The ameliorations arising from this system were not long invisible. Melleray soon became an object of agricultural interest, and the timid and heavy farmers of Brittany, were encouraged to imitate the experiments which they saw so eminently successful. Duke Doudauville placed fourteen scholars in the agricultural and horticultural school of Melleray.*

* The Life of Father Antony, and the History of Citeaux, from the 12th, to the 19th Century.

CHAPTER XIII.

FATHER ANTONY APPOINTED VISITOR-GENERAL OF THE ORDER. HIS VISIT AND REPORT. STATE OF MELLERAY. VISIT OF THE DUCHESS OF BERRY. FATHER ANTONY'S LETTER TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN. FATHER VINCENT AND FATHER MALACHY SENT TO IRELAND. COMMENCE A FOUNDATION AT RATHMORE. THE REASONS FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF MELLERAY. ATTACK ON THE MONASTERY. THE EXPULSION OF THE MEMBERS. THE IMPRISONMENT OF THE ENGLISH. THEIR TRANSPORTATION TO IRELAND IN A GOVERNMENT VESSEL. THE FOUNDATION OF MOUNT MELLERAY, &c.

On the death of Dom. Augustine in 1827, it was necessary to make arrangements for the organization of the Cistercian monasteries in connection with La Trappe. Pope Leo XII. appointed Father Antony, visitor-general of all the houses so related, with a commission to examine the interiour state of each house, and to propose such measures as might appear to him calculated to establish in all the filiations of the same parent, uniformity of discipline, and harmony of government. He was empowered, at the same time, to introduce into the convents of females, whatever modification he might consider prudent. The travelling necessary for this general visit, brought the good abbot more into connection with the world, than was pleasing to his humility and retired habits; and exhibited to public admiration, that delicate sensibility of mind and amiability of manners, which had hitherto been confined to the cloister.

Father Antony visited all the Cistercian houses, both of men and women in connection with La Trappe. He

thought it his duty to mitigate the austerities of some of the female communities, in which an over fervent zeal had carried them beyond the regulations, even of Val-sainte. He ordained that all the convents which followed the constitutions of the last-mentioned monastery, should use milk in Lent in the preparation of their food, in place of water, take the ordinary drink of the country, never rise before one o'clock in the morning, and never dine later than mid-day. He advised the suppression of the third Order, which Dom. Augustine had instituted for the instruction of youth, as incompatible with the regulations of the then existing government in France.

With respect to uniformity of discipline, he advised the adoption of the Constitutions of Abbé Rancé for a basis; most probably, because the name of this great Reformer of monasticism had become very popular of late years. But he suggested restrictions which we will place before the reader in his own words.

"St. Benedict prescribed for his Religious, nearly seven hours manual labour each day. But the divine office was not so long in his time, as at the present. Abbé de Rancé brought back manual labour to La Trappe, which, during a long period, had been banished from the circle of monastic duties. But he judged it prudent not to enforce, at first, the hours of daily work enjoined by the rule, lest he might disgust, instead of reforming, those who had not been accustomed to bodily fatigue, and destroy where he was anxious to save. Hence he limited manual labour to three hours each day; half in the morning, and half after dinner. Nothing could be more discreet or more salutary. But De Rancé prescribed rules for Religious who had taken the vow of poverty, and desired to live in poverty; but their poverty was an exercise of penance, not a necessity arising from the absolute destitution of their monastery. Times, however, have changed; the property of monasteries has been confiscated. The endowments of

those religious houses which exist at present, are little more than a cipher. It is now necessary, therefore, for monks to labour for their actual subsistence. They are reminded in these days of the instruction of their great founder, St. Benedict: 'Let them esteem themselves happy, if they are obliged to live by the labour of their hands.'

"Dom. Augustine and his brethren at Val-sainte, prompted by a zeal more worthy of admiration than imitation, pushed the duty of manual labour to an excess. They wished, beside the chanting of the whole of the canonical office, as many hours to be devoted to daily labour, as had been recommended by St. Benedict. From this accumulation of exercises there was no spare time for reading or reflection.

"It is true, however, that if too long intervals be given to religious persons who lead an austere and painful life—a life of watching and fasting—they will be neither better nor more fervent by this indulgence. Lassitude, heaviness, or that which is worse, dissipation, will occupy a portion of their vacant hours; a fact which may unfortunately be witnessed in some of the houses which follow the rule of De Rancé.

"I believe, then, without any injury to other duties, it would be easy to appoint four and a half or five hours' manual labour each day,—a period which would not distress or over-fatigue any one, and yet be sufficient to earn a portion of the means requisite for subsistence, and to promote both the regularity and the health of the community."

This document, of which we have given the substance, was forwarded to Cardinal Odescalchi, secretary of the congregation of bishops and regulars; but years flowed away without any result. In the meantime we must continue our relation of other important matters.

About this period Melleray beheld in its silent corri-

dors, in its church, and in its gardens peopled by industrious monks,—not merely travellers, attracted by a profane curiosity, or young persons, prompted by the love of novelty to try the black bread of the penitential inmates, or the amateurs of agricultural pursuits,—but from time to time pious persons and ecclesiastics who came to revive the dormant energy of their souls by the power of example displayed by the children of St. Stephen and St. Bernard; and sometimes even the great ones of the earth would abandon the dissipation of the court to enjoy a few moments' peace in holy prayer with the devout brotherhood.

Father Anthony had preached the funeral oration of the Duke of Berry, in 1820, in the Cathedral Church of Nantes. He did this at the earnest solicitation of the bishop of that see. In 1829 the widow of the assassinated Prince, in testimony of gratitude to the orator for the eloquent discourse which he had pronounced over her deceased husband, honoured Melleray with her presence, and was received with all the testimony of gladness, and with all the ceremony consistent with the strict rules of the Cistercian monastery.

Soon after the change of government in July, 1830, Father Antony beheld the signs of a storm which he feared, would burst over the peaceful abode of Melleray. Hence he consented to establish a foundation in Ireland, which had been solicited by the Archbishop of Dublin. The following is a copy of a letter which he wrote in reply to his Grace:

"My Lord,

"The events which, during some months back, have been passing in France, are not less known to your Grace than to myself. Those which still threaten this unhappy kingdom, and which are directed more against religion than against the monarch, have made me think seriously

before God, how I may preserve the precious and interesting colony which it hath pleased His goodness, notwithstanding my incapability and unworthiness, to confide to my care. I have cast a glance through Europe, and I tremble. For everywhere I behold commotion, insurrection, discord. Ireland appears to me, at this moment, the most secure from any revolutionary movement. The great majority of its inhabitants are Catholic; their attachment to the religion of their forefathers is proverbial. Emancipation, which they so long and so justly demanded, is now granted, and has already become the best surety of peace, in a country the spiritual wants of which are supplied by prelates whose zeal equals their piety. But the decisive consideration, my Lord, is this plain fact; in a house composed at this time of a hundred and seventy members, forty of these are from Ireland. One objection alone meets and opposes me,—the want of funds. The greater part of the members who have joined us, brought nothing with them but their good will. The repairs of our monastery,—the purchase of the property,—the support of so large a family, have entirely exhausted our feeble resources; so that we have not the means wherewith to assist our brothers in the establishment of a foundation in a foreign land. But God, who is rich in mercy, and whose Providence has constantly watched over us, since the commotions in France, has given to us at this moment a fresh proof of His unspeakable kindness and generosity in our favour. Many pious and respectable persons of both sexes in your Grace's diocese, have offered in a most handsome manner to supply funds for the foundation of a Cistercian house in Ireland. I behold in these traits of benevolence, my Lord, the worthy descendants of those noble-minded men, who formerly adorned Ireland with so many religious asylums, and who testified a deep interest in the monks of Citeaux,—the children of St. Stephen and St. Bernard. I feel bound to respond to so

generous an appeal; but that which principally confirms my resolution, is the assurance that the bishops of Ireland, and more especially your Grace, will favour the undertaking by their kind sympathy and protection,

"For this reason I have sent the Rev. Father Vincent Ryan, Prior of Melleray, and Father Malachy, to lay before your Grace our present position, our designs, and the details necessary for a full explanation of the subject. I do not doubt but that, under your Grace's auspices, this Institution we have in contemplation, and which is intended for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, will prosper, and bring forth abundant fruit. May our wishes, my Lord, be realized! May Ireland again present that fervour and piety which rendered her eminent even among the Catholic kingdoms of the universe! May the children of St. Bernard and of Abbé Rancé, even in these later days—days of sorrow, and general defection from the faith—re-people once more your solitudes, and console the church for the losses which she daily deplores, and which seem to bring us to the borders of those unhappy times, when, as our Divine Master informs us, faith will be found no longer on the earth."

Father Vincent found the establishment of a house in Ireland much more difficult than he and his good abbot had anticipated. The nephew of the Rev. Mother of the convent at Killarney rented a house and about fifty acres of land at Rathmore, in the county of Kerry, about twelve miles from Killarney. He resigned to Father Vincent his claims to this farm, intending himself to join the infant community. Here Father Vincent and Father Malachy commenced, by hiring both their monastery and their land,—the establishment which was afterwards transferred to Mount Melleray.

Whilst Father Vincent was thus prudently occupied in Ireland, events were occurring at Melleray which cut off

all hopes of return to France, and rendered it absolutely necessary for him to provide a foundation in his native land. The agricultural school of Melleray, instead of exciting a laudable emulation, created an unhappy and fatal jealousy in similar institutions. "Father Antony wished that his religious should edify the country without being a burden to it, and should make fruitful, by their labours, the soil on which they prayed; and that industry, perfecting what the culture of the fields had commenced, the labourers, distributed in workhouses to the number of twenty, should form, as it were, a colony capable of supporting itself. But this is not all; he wished to diffuse blessings beyond his own sphere; he wished his monastery to be an inexhaustible source of alms, and of salutary examples, even in a temporal point of view.

"All those who have visited Melleray can bear witness to the good quality of the productions, the perfection of the system, the ability of the workmen, and, at the same time, to the gracious and noble hospitality which they were sure of receiving. One could not but admire such activity and such perfect order, an industry so ingenious, and a fervour so touching. There seemed, from the strictness of of their obedience, to be among them but one will, though they were as a people; for, in a few years, from fifty-nine labourers, who, with Father Antony, had crossed the sea, their number had increased to a hundred and ninety-two, assembled from France, Spain, Ireland, Scotland, England, and Italy. They had but one heart and one soul. Wisdom, and the meek constancy of the Father Abbot, governed them all as one man."—[Biograph. Memoir of Dom. Antony, &c., Catholic Magazine, June, 1839.]

After the revolution of July, 1831, the competitors of Melleray thought the time favourable for the destruction of their rival. The attachment of Father Antony to the elder branch of the Bourbon family was generally known. He had shared in their exile during the days of the repub-

lic and the empire. He owed to their government the happiness of his restoration to his native land. In the year 1820, he had pronounced the funeral oration of the Duke of Berry; in 1829, he had entertained the widowed duchess. Hence, Melleray was falsely represented as the rendezvous of the enemies of the reigning family; and this, too, in a neighbourhood in which these enemies were numerous. To the jealousy of a new dynasty in the royal family, and a new constitution, was associated the jealousy of national pride. Many of the members of Melleray were natives of England and Ireland. Hence, Melleray was described as an establishment of foreigners, who came to compete with French industry, and carry away the profits of trade which ought to be enjoyed by the poor of the land. It was confidently asserted that Father Antony was an Englishman. And many similar calumnies were put in circulation, that they might give an impetus to the design of suppressing the monastery. And they finally accomplished their task.

On the fifth of August, 1831, the Prefect of Loire Inférieure obtained from government an arrest, by the power of which, the religious community of Melleray was suppressed and dissolved. On the 28th of September, about two in the afternoon, more than six hundred soldiers of horse, foot, and gendarmerie, surrounded the abbey as a place besieged, and appointed sentinels at all the gates. Then the authorities assembled in the abbot's room, and declared, in virtue of an ordinance sanctioned by Napoleon, the house of Melleray was illegal and unconstitutional; and, consequently, they had authority to dissolve it immediately, and to give passports to all its members. These functionaries, afraid to avow their true motives for these harsh proceedings, adduced ordinances which had been abolished by later governments. It is just, however, to state, that the subprefect of Châteaubriant made this public and candid declaration: "One of the chief reasons

which have compelled us to have recourse to these unpleasant measures, is the clamour now prevalent amongst good citizens, and respectable parents of families, that almost all the people of the neighbourhood prefer the abbey mill to their mills; that the vegetables of Melleray are bought in preference, and at a cheaper price than from the ordinary green-grocers; and that the leather of the monastery is in great request."

Father Antony, from the first moment of the arrest, adopted a firm and noble attitude, which he preserved during the whole of this unpleasant business. He regarded himself, in the presence of these intruders into his monastery, as a citizen protected by the Charter of liberty, sanctioned by the new government; and his establishment—as a property within the limits of the law,—secured by all the rights and privileges conferred upon other properties. He proclaimed this principle: that by a charter which granted liberty of worship to every one, all anterior laws which interfered with this free worship were abrogated;—that under a charter, in which there was no State religion, no one could be disturbed upon the ground alone of his religion, whatever that religion might be;—that under a legislation which no longer recognised the rights of the religious profession, but left it entirely an open matter for each to adopt or not, as he pleased—no one could be considered legally as a religious person. Their present proceedings, therefore, were unjustifiable. He thus disconcerted for a time their whole scheme. "The ordinance," he said, "which you cite has been abrogated by the Charter of liberty. Interiorly, I and the inmates of Melleray are just whatever you please to call us; monks, or Quakers, or Saint-Simonians. This is a matter with which no one has a right to interfere. But exteriorly, we are a society of agriculturists. I am the superintendent, the proprietor of the house. I dwell in my own home; and I am allowed the assistance of as many fellow-

labourers as I please. This is not the case of a reunion of persons contrary to the penal law."

In place of replying to this argument, they asked him if he consented to, or resisted their demands? "Neither the one nor the other," he answered; "I appeal to a minister better instructed, to a prefect who is more enlightened upon the nature of his duties." These words checked all immediate proceedings. The military waited for fresh instructions from the prefect. But again animated by the injunctions of their chief, who relied upon the orders of the minister of the Interior, and upon the triumph of bayonets, they reinvested Melleray on the 4th of October. *

They gave passports to forty-five French brothers, and signified to them the necessity of immediate departure. The gensdarmes entered into the court at a gallop, drew their sabres, and prevented all attempt at appeal. Father Antony thought it prudent to put off the religious habit, to appear dressed as a citizen, and to discontinue the regular exercises, until he could examine what rights the Charter conferred upon him, as he would then stand an obedient subject to the government of France.

On the other hand, the officers of the administration, satisfied with their first display of violence, and obliged, moreover, to observe some terms with the English, whom the British Consul, Henry Newman, Esq., at Nantes, had taken under his protection, adjourned the execution of

* During the period the military were guarding the avenues of the Monastery; as brother Medard, a convert brother, was returning from the grange or farmyard, before the hour of Prime in the morning, when the rule enjoins profound silence, he was arrested by the soldiers, who addressed to him all kinds of questions, but received no answer. Their words died away upon the morning breeze without a response. They then threatened him, shook him, presented their guns to his breast, with horrid imprecations; but no word escaped his lips. They had found a true Cistercian monk. Several brothers observed a similar silence on similar occasions.

their design, leaving, however, a troop of gensdarmes as a constant guard upon the monastery, and to be supported by it. Mr. Newman, the English Consul, was told by the prefect of the department, that it was not allowable by the laws of France, for the proprietor of a factory to regulate the exercises of his workmen, or to summon them to prayer by the sound of bell, or to clothe them in any particular or singular dress. Upon this representation, the Consul desired his countymen, to discontinue the use of these things. Under this erroneous impression, he began to take measures for the safe return of the British subjects to their own country. He obtained a few weeks delay, that due preparations might be made for their departure. But their expulsion was irrevocably decreed, and was to be executed with as little delay as possible. Mr. Newman the consul, represented in energetic terms, that as the French government had, fifteen years ago, conveyed the English Cistercians from Weymouth to France at its own charge; so it should, now it was expelling them from its shores, be responsible for the expenses of their journey to their own country. The prefect seized this occasion of removing the difficulties which thwarted the completion of his decree, and informed the consul that he would have a vessel ready by the 20th of November, to convey the British Trappists to England. The proposal was accepted as the best he could obtain in the unfortunate circumstances in which his countrymen were placed.

On the 12th of November, the sub-prefect of Châteaubriant, accompanied by the King's Procurator, the central commissary of police, the captain of the gendarmerie went to the monastery, and commanded the English members of the community, whom they designated foreign operatives, to leave forthwith the house which they at present made their domicile. No one gave any reply or took any notice of the command. Then he requested Father Antony, under the appellation of Mr. Saulnier, to employ his authority,

as proprietor of the establishment, to oblige these persons to obey the law and to leave the house. Father Antony replied: "These persons whom you wish me to dismiss, are my operatives; and upon this title I will keep them." They then addressed their command to brothers—Palmer, Nugent, and Gaul; but they refused obedience. The soldiers immediately received orders to carry them out of the monastery. All were expelled in this manner, with the exception of five who were left in the infirmary too much indisposed to be removed. When their expulsion was completed, they were assembled before the Mayor's house, in the village of Melleray, and asked if they had any means of subsistence? They answered in the negative. Forthwith they were sent under an escort of gensdarmes, and a detachment of the 14th light infantry, to the city of Nantes. There they were confined in two chambers in St. James's Barracks. They arrived on Saturday in the afternoon, and were regaled with bread and water. On the Sunday, they requested to hear mass, but met with a refusal. Sentinels were stationed around the place of their confinement. The good Catholics of Nantes, soon, however, came overflowing with charity to their assistance; and applied every alleviation in their power to the sufferings of the brotherhood, who were being torn from an asylum sweeter and dearer to them than their native home,—their own father-land.

On the following Wednesday, the 16th of November, the consul went to the barracks to ascertain what were their intentions in their present position. They unanimously declared their desire to be to return to Melleray, under the protection of their friend and superior, Mr. Saulnier. But Mr. Newman, with all the urbanity and benevolence which distinguished his character, replied that the Prefect would not permit it. He, then, endeavoured to show them the difficulties in which they would be placed, if they allowed the present opportunity of being

conveyed by the French government to their own country, in a sloop of war, which had just arrived at the mouth of the river, to pass by. "What, then, will become of you? I can, indeed, have you set at liberty in the city, and shield you under my protection; but have you any means for your maintenance in France, independent of the establishment of Melleray? I am ready to give passports to those who have funds for their support. They may act as they please. They may remain in France until the question respecting political and religious liberty, your right to which is now disputed, be finally solved. But to those who have no means of support, I can grant assistance only during three days, conformably to my general instructions; after which, the opportunity of returning to your own country, now offered by the French Government, will have passed for ever." Those who knew the French language, trusting to their own individual efforts for subsistence, solicited passports. Sixty-four desired their destination to be Ireland, and no other country. On the nineteenth of November, they were conducted in four omnibuses, under a military escort to a steam-vessel, which carried them down the river to the Hebe, a sloop of war, then lying at St. Nazaire. They remained nine days on board, waiting for a favourable wind, without being allowed any communication with the land. On the 28th they set sail, and arrived in the cove of Cork on the 1st of December.

Thus cast upon the shores of their own "green Isle," in a state of utter destitution, they were received with that humanity, charity, and sympathy, which have uniformly distinguished the children of St. Patrick. The inhabitants of the town of Cove and the city of Cork vied with each other in rendering assistance and comfort to the forlorn brotherhood. With the exception of five or six, the religious went in a body to Father Vincent at Rathmore. He explained to them his present needy cir-

cumstances, and stated, that any of the members who wished, were at liberty to seek a home elsewhere. A few only took advantage of this permission.

Sir Richard Keane, a Protestant gentleman, had lately made over to Father Vincent, for a mere nominal rent, about 600 acres of barren mountainous land, near Cappoquin, in the county of Waterford. At the commencement of the year 1832, Father Vincent sent five convert brothers to begin the great toil of its enclosure and cultivation. They were without any means, and without even a dwelling to shelter them from the inclemency of the weather. But charity immediately came to their relief. About seven acres had been already broken up and put into a state of cultivation. Upon this small plot stood a cottage, which was inhabited by a keeper of the moorlands. Sir Richard gave this cottage to the religious for their immediate use and residence. No sooner was the destitution of these victims of French jealousy and illiberality made known to the neighbourhood, than the vigilant pastors raised their voices, and the people, unable to afford any pecuniary aid, voluntered their physical strength in the virtuous cause. The Rev. Mr. Qualey, of Modeligo, set the first example. At the head of 300 able bodied parishioners, he volunteered in their name a day's labour, during which he remained with them, animating and encouraging them by precept and example, and at the conclusion, led them home in the most perfect order. Next came the Rev. Mr. Walsh, of Cappoquin, and his curate, with 2,000 of their parishioners, each man being provided with a spade, or some agricultural instrument. In like manner many others. A body of labourers came from a village in the county of Cork, a distance of sixteen miles. These latter set out at eleven o'clock, p. m. on Sunday night, and arrived at the temporary chapel at three, a. m. on Monday, assisted at the first mass, and then went to work, at which they continued till an advanced hour in the

afternoon, when they retired to their homes, where they arrived about the hour of midnight.

When the last mentioned company were entering their village, they were met by another party who were then just setting out upon the same heroic errand. In fact, the whole country around was animated by the same ardent charity ;—so that no labour, no sacrifice, seemed too great. In each of the companies were to be seen many respectable farmers' wives, and daughters, many aged matrons and delicate girls, who emulated each other in carrying stones and materials necessary for the construction of the fences in their aprons.

By these generous exertions, the fences were soon completed, and twenty-five acres of land prepared for cultivation. A building 119 feet long, by 20 feet broad, and two stories high, was in a short time erected and made ready for the reception of the remaining portion of the brotherhood.* The waste land around the enclosure of the monastic domain, was quickly purchased and put into a state of cultivation ; so that property which had been lying for years dormant, found a ready and a profitable market, and is now conferring the benefit of subsistence upon thousands of peaceful inhabitants.

In a short period after this humble commencement, Father Vincent began the erection of the present extensive and handsome monastery, designated out of respect to the parent house in France, Mount Melleray.† Father Vincent,

* Much of this account of the enclosure of the farm is copied from Andrew's Orthodox Journal, July, 1833.

† The first stone of the present Abbey of Mount Melleray, was laid by Sir Richard Keane, on the feast of St. Bernard, the 20th of August, 1833; after it had been solemnly blessed by Dr. Abraham, the Bishop of Waterford, in the presence of a numerous body of clergy, and a concourse of nearly 20,000 people.

It was inhabited by the community in the year 1838, and divine service was celebrated in the Church for the first time on the 21st of October, the same year.

The highly venerated, Father Vincent Ryan, the first Abbot

through the mediation of Cardinal Weld, obtained from his Holiness, Gregory XVI. briefs which raised the new edifice to the dignity of an abbey, and appointed him the first mitred abbot, with jurisdiction entirely independent of the mother house. The consecration of the first mitred abbot in Ireland since the fatal period of the Reformation, took place in the private chapel of Dr. Abraham, Bishop of Waterford, on the 17th of May, 1835. A filiation from this abbey was established near Dubuque, in the United States of America, in the year 1850, under the appellation of "Our Lady of La Trappe, New Melleray."*

died on the 9th of December, 1845, in the 57th year of his age, and the 34th of his religious profession. He presided over his Monastery, as Abbot, ten years. His health for several years had been gradually giving way under an attack of dropsy. His death was calm and edifying, amidst the prayers and tears of his beloved children, who bewailed in his departure for the possession of his eternal reward,—a kind and amiable superior.

* The authorities for the matter of this chapter, are the History of La Trappe, &c., vol. ii. Life of F. Antony,—a relation of the sufferings of the Irish Monks of La Trappe, &c., with much oral evidence.

CHAPTER XIV.

PASSPORTS REFUSED TO THE BROTHERS WHO REMAINED IN FRANCE. THE PRAISEWORTHY CONDUCT OF THE ENGLISH CONSUL. FATHER ANTONY'S LETTER TO THE EXILED RELIGIOUS. THE RESUMPTION OF MONASTIC DUTIES AT MELLERAY. THE REUNION OF THE HOUSES PRACTISING DIFFERENT REGULATIONS. THE DECREE OF GREGORY XIV.

THE fifteen English Cistercian brothers who remained at Nantes the day before the embarkation of the rest for Ireland, requested passports from the Consul for Melleray, and obtained them, but the Prefect refused his signature. He told them, if found in the streets of Nantes, they should be arrested, notwithstanding the fact that the British Consul had taken them under his protection. Upon this information Mr. Newman wrote a strong remonstrance to the Prefect, in the name of his British Majesty, and desired him to sign the passports of his countrymen, either for Melleray or some other locality; for it is now well known by every one, that no rebellion had occured at Mr. Saulnier's establishment. The judge of Châteaubriant had declared, that it is neither a crime nor a misdemeanour against the laws of France, for a person to wear the religious habit, or to ring a bell for his own convenience. These very things, indeed, were now tolerated by the authorities with respect to the members who remained at Melleray. If, therefore, he refused to sign the passports, he should feel himself obliged to send information of the matter to the English ambassador at Paris. A tribute of praise is due to the noble and manly conduct of the British Consul. He saved these unpro-

tected individuals from the illegal and tyrannical oppression of the Prefect. He took them to his own house, and by the joint assistance of a neighbour, he accommodated them with a home for nine weeks, and dismissed the soldiers appointed to guard them. Religion and liberty, therefore, will ever award to him their hearty thanks for this courageous interference. In reply to Mr. Newman, the Prefect still refused to sign the passports, but assured him that no violence or coercion would be offered to the individuals who had sought his protection. They would not, however, be allowed to leave the city of Nantes.

Father Antony addressed the following letter to his spiritual children, after their compulsory separation from him at Melleray.

"Beloved brethren and children in Jesus Christ,

"I participate, with the tenderest and the most lively compassion, in your trials and afflictions. Would to Heaven it were in my power to offer myself a victim for your peace! Be, however, courageous: remember the consoling words read in the Gospel of yesterday, the Feast of the Saints of our Order: 'Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' I thank God most heartily for the fortitude with which you support this severe probation. Continue stedfast in your reliance upon His infinite goodness. Is it not a glorious dignity to bear the honourable title of confessors of the Faith? But take care, and render yourselves deserving of this illustrious distinction, by a profound submission to the holy will of God. 'Bless them that persecute you; and curse not.' Remember that everything which passes away with time is trifling and momentary; and that the tribulations of this fleeting life bear no proportion to the eternal weight of glory prepared for you in heaven. I know not if I shall be so happy as to see and embrace any of you again in this valley of

affliction and the shadow of death; but this hope is laid up in my bosom, that through the merits of Jesus Christ, the protection of our ever glorious and tender Mother, the amiable Virgin Mary, and the special patronage of all the holy angels and saints, we shall soon meet again, and be reunited in that blissful land, where we shall love, praise, and adore our God during the endless ages of eternity. Cherishing towards you these paternal feelings, and with a heart overflowing with sorrow, I tenderly and affectionately impart to you my benediction."

Father Antony was left in the quiet possession of Melleray, with a small remnant of his religious. The French members, who had been dispersed at the commencement of the persecution, were at liberty to return. The abbey of Melleray remained, however, many years crippled in its exertions, and recovered only slowly from the prostration which it had received from these acts of injustice and oppression.

Revered and beloved by his religious as a father, the venerable abbot Antony was now drawing near to the termination of his earthly pilgrimage. Like the ancient fathers of the desert, he lived continually in the fear of the judgments of God. He often said that he would be too happy, if the Lord would permit him to remain till the end of the world in purgatory, in order that he might obtain eternal glory; and he again implored this favour some moments before he died. This explains the rigour with which he treated himself; a rigour so great, that it was necessary to have recourse, not only to reiterated entreaties, but even to threaten him with a general chapter, to make him adopt some alleviations which had become indispensable. He suffered very much, during the whole of his life, from rheumatism, which he had contracted on the first year of his profession, in observing too much to the letter, in an inn, the obligation of sleeping upon the ground.

The night preceding his death, after violent cramp in his stomach, which he had borne without receiving any relief, he rose at one o'clock, for the purpose of repairing to the choir, and presiding over the office for the solemnity of the Epiphany. He occupied a room separated from the dormitory, and was unwilling that any person should watch with him. Having advanced some paces from his chamber, he fell, far from all help, in the middle of the corridor. The noise of his fall and a faint groan were heard accidentally by one of the religious, who was crossing, at the time, the other extremity of the passage. He was lifted up and carried to his cell. Then no longer disguising the danger of his condition, he immediately asked for the administration of the sacraments, which he received with admirable presence of mind. He gave to his religious his last advice with more than usual eloquence and unction, and slept the sleep of the just without a struggle and without agony. The extraordinary concourse, both of clergy and laity, at his obsequies, attested the profound veneration in which his memory was universally held. He expired on the morning of the Epiphany, 1839, in the 75th year of his age, and 43rd of his religious profession. —[Vide Catholic Mag. June, 1839.]

In 1834, several abbots of different Cistercian Houses, travelled to Rome for the settlement of those matters, which had called Dom. Augustine to the eternal city; and which had remained undecided since his death. Every time there had been a desire expressed, and measures adopted for the reunion of all the Cistercian Houses, which were filiations of La Trappe, under some definite constitution, some difficulty or other had arisen and destroyed the prospect of success. The reader will remember, that we have mentioned two different communities, both offshoots of La Trappe, both bearing the same appellation, yet practising two distinct observances. The one followed the regulations of Val-sainte, which in austerity went

beyond the Rule of St. Benedict, and which, during many years, met with great opposition; so that the Holy See refused to make them the common law of all the houses: the other simply adopted the constitutions of De Rancé, as practised at La Trappe. Dom. Eugène and the Religious of Darfeld had resumed these constitutions, on their re-entrance into their Monastery, 1815. This observance, less severe than the Rule of St. Benedict, met with more sympathy and favour. But, according to the testimony of Father Antony which we have already related, it did not meet the exigencies of the times, with respect to labour and monastic poverty. It would, therefore, seem imprudent to impose it upon those who had the desire and the strength, for a longer period of daily manual labour.

Influenced by the spirit of conciliation, the observers of the regulations of Val-sainte declared, that they were ready to abandon all the peculiar usages, which Dom. Augustine had subjoined to the Rule of St. Benedict, and to fall back upon the usages of Citeaux, established by St. Stephen and St. Bernard. But the members of the less severe observance, would not meet these conditions, and refused to depart in any thing, from the Constitutions of De Rancé.

Pope Gregory XVI. of happy memory, heard the petitions which were presented to him by both parties, with a lively interest; and appointed a special commission of three cardinals, Odescalchi, Pedicini, and Weld, to make a report upon the case, with reference to its final arrangement. They were assisted by the counsel and the experience of Father Fulgence, Abbot of Bellefontaine, and Father Joseph Marie, Abbot of La Trappe. The following Decree of His Holiness was the result of this commission:

"Kalendis Octobris, Anno 1834, Eminentissimi et Re-

verendissimi, D. D. S. R. E. Cardinales, Carolus Odescalchi, Præfectus et Rector; Carolus Maria Pedicini et Thomas Weld, a sanctissimo domino nostro Gregorio XVI. e S. congregatione negotiis et consultationibus episcorum, et regularium præposita spectatius deputati, quo aptius monasteria Trappensium in Gallia instituantur et virtutibus florescant; auditis episcopis singularum diœcesium in quibus eadem monasteria erecta sunt, et audito Patre Antonio ab eadem S. congregatione visitatore deputato, censuerunt ea quæ sequuntur decernere et statuere:

I. Monasteria omnia Trappensium in Gallia, unam congregationem constituant, quæ appellabitur congregatio monachorum Cisterciensium Beatæ Mariæ de Trappa.

II. Huic moderator generalis ordinis Cisterciensis præerit, et singulos abbates confirmabit.

III. In Gallia vicarius generalis habeatur omni potestate præditus ad congregationem rectè administrandum.

IV. Id muneris perpetuò conjunctum erit cum abbatiâ antiqui monasterii Beatæ Mariæ de Trappa, ex quo Trappenses initium habuerunt; ita ut singuli illius monasterii abbates canonice electi potestatum simul et munus vicarii generalis consequantur.

V. Quotannis vicarius generalis tum capitulum celebrabit, reliquis abbatibus vel prioribus conventualibus accitis, tum etiam singula monasteria per se vel per alium abbatem visitabit: monasterium vero Beatæ Mariæ de Trappa a quatuor abbatibus monasteriorum Mellerariensis, Portus Salutis, Bellofontis et Gardiensis visitabitur.

VI. Tota congregatio regulam sancti Benedicti et constitutiones abbatis de Rancé observabit, salvis præscriptionibus quæ hoc decreto continentur.

VII. Pareant decreto S. Rituum congregationis diei 20 Aprilis 1822, super rituali, missali, breviario et martyrologio quibus uti debebant.

VIII. Labor manuum ordinarius æstivo tempore ultra sex horas, et ultra quatuor et dimidiam reliquo tempore

non producatur. Quod vero ad jejunia, precationes, et cantum chori pertinet, aut S. Benedicti regulam, aut constitutiones abbatis de Rancé, ex recepto more cujusque monasterii sequantur.

IX. Quæ articulo octavo constituta sunt, ea præsides monasteriorum moderari possunt et mitigare pro eis monachis quos ob ætatem, aut valetudinem, aut aliam justam causam, aliqua indulgentia dignos existimaverint.

X. Quamvis monasteria Trappensium à jurisdictione episcoporum exempta sunt, ea tamen ob peculiares rationes et donec aliter statuatur, jurisdictioni eorumdem episcoporum subsint qui procedant tanquam apostolicæ sedis delegati.

XI. Moniales Trappenses in Gallia ad hanc congregationem pertineant, et earum monasteria à jurisdictione, episcoporum non erunt exempta. Cura tamen uniuscujusque monasterii monialium uni aut alteri monacho proximioris monasterii committatur. Monachos autem quos idoneos ad illud munus judicaverint episcopi delegant atque approbent, et confessarios extraordinarios e clero etiam seculari, deputare poterunt.

XII. Constitutiones, quas moniales servare in posterum debebunt, judicio Sanctæ Sedis subjiciantur.

Hoc decretum S. S. D. N. Gregorius XVI., P. P. in audientia habita a D. secretario S. congregationis negotiis et consultationibus episcoporum et regularium præpositæ, hac die 3 Octobris, anno 1834, ratum in omnibus, habuit et confirmavit et servari mandavit.

CAROLUS. CARD. ODESCALCHI, Præfect.
JOANNES ARCHIEP. EPHESINUS, Secret.

Translation :—

The first day of October, 1834, their Eminences, the Most Reverend Cardinals, Odescalchi, prefect and reporter, Charles Mary Pedicini, and Thomas Weld, members of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, and specially

deputed by our holy Father, Gregory XVI., to devise for the Trappist monasteries in France, a form of government, by which regularity might be more duly observed, and virtue flourish ; a government founded upon the reports of the bishops, in whose dioceses the monasteries are situated, and upon the relation of Father Antony, appointed Visitor-general by the said congregation, have decided upon, and decreed the following regulations:—

I. All the Trappist monasteries in France shall form one congregation, under the name of "The Congregation of Cistercian Monks of our Lady of La Trappe."

II. The President-general shall preside and confirm the election of the abbots.

III. There shall be in France a Vicar-general, vested with all necessary power for the proper government of the congregation.

IV. This office shall be perpetually attached to the ancient abbey of our Lady of La Trappe, from which the Trappists derive their origin; so that the abbots of this monastery, canonically elected, shall have the authority and the office of Vicar-general.

V. Every year the Vicar-general shall hold a general chapter, at which all the abbots and conventual priors shall assist. Moreover, he shall visit, either by himself or by some other abbot, all the monasteries of the congregation. But the abbey of our Lady of La Trappe shall be visited by the four abbots of Melleray, Bellefontaine, Port du Salut, and Gard.

VI. The whole congregation shall follow the rule of St. Benedict, and the constitutions of Abbé Rancé, save in certain regulations contained in the present decree.

VII. They shall obey the decree of the Congregation of Rites, dated the 20th of April, 1822, with respect to the Ritual, Missal, Breviary, and Martyrology, which they ought to adopt.

VIII. The ordinary manual labour shall not exceed

six hours in summer, and four hours and a half the rest of the year. With regard to fasts, prayers, and chanting in the choir, they shall follow either the rule of St. Benedict, or the Constitutions of Abbé Rancé, according to the received usage of each monastery.

IX. Superiors have power to modify and mitigate the regulations contained in Art. VIII. in favour of those religious who, they believe, are deserving of some indulgence on account of age, bad health, or some other lawful reason.

X. Although Trappist monasteries are exempt from the jurisdiction of bishops; nevertheless, for particular reasons, and until further instruction, they shall be subject to those bishops who are delegates of the Apostolic See.

XI. The nuns of La Trappe, in France, shall be united to this congregation, but shall not be exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishops. Yet the spiritual direction of each convent shall be confided to one or two religious from the neighbouring monastery. The bishops shall choose, and approve of the religious whom they judge eligible for this employment. They have the liberty to depute, if they please, secular priests for confessors extraordinary.

XII. The constitutions which nuns shall observe hereafter shall be submitted to the judgement of the Holy See.

Our holy Father, Gregory XVI., at an audience obtained by the secretary of the Sacred Congregation of bishops and Regulars, on the 3rd of October, 1834, ratified and confirmed in all things, the present decree, and commanded it to be observed.

CARDINAL CHARLES ODESCALCHI, PREFECT.
JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF EPHESUS, SECRETARY.

Candour requires that we should state the inefficiency

of this decree to meet the difficulty of a perfect coalition of the two observances. Other decrees have since been passed by the Holy See; but, as they are only temporary, we deem it unnecessary to trouble the reader with their official details. And this more especially as a final arrangement and decision are daily expected from his present Holiness, Pius IX.

CHAPTER XV.

CERTAIN OBJECTIONS ANSWERED. ST. BENEDICT'S RULE. COMMENDATIONS OF IT. FACILITIES OF PRACTISING THE CONSTITUTIONS OF CITEAUX, IN THE PRESENT AGE. DECISION OF DOCTORS IN THEOLOGY. FASTING, &c.

It appears almost a duty on the part of the writer, or rather compiler, of this History, to arrest in their progress certain vague objections to the revival of the Cistercian Order, which are floating, without any definite tendency, upon the surface of general conversation. It will not be called in question by any one conversant with the history of religion, that relaxation, in its own defence, advances a great deal of bold and ungrounded theory; whilst fervour, earnest and religious fervour, without paying attention to the wishes of theory, proceeds at once to action, and proves, by the infallible test of experience, her opponent to be in error. The one sees in every act of self-denial, in every instance of mortification which gives pain to the perishable body, an enemy that must be avoided: the other beholds in every restraint upon the passions, in every practice that is repugnant to flesh and blood, a fresh stimulus to renewed exertion, the ladder of advancement to higher degrees of perfection. There always has, therefore, and there always will be a vigorous opposition between the advocates of the broad and beaten road which leads to destruction, and the narrow and the rugged path which conducts to life.

In the first place, we hear it stated, as if universally true, that "The ancient religious orders were established to meet particular exigencies of the times, or particular

evils which afflicted the Church of God. They were admirably calculated to accomplish the work intended by their saintly founders. But the circumstances to which they were adapted, the evils of which they were the reformers, have yielded to others of a different nature. The times which were favourable to their development and their glory, have changed. Labour, totally different from that which they were designed to effect, has now to be carried on by zealous husbandmen in the Lord's vineyard. Hence they cannot be restored without considerable modification,—modification which will affect, more or less, their very principles,—the ground work of their institution."

Though we may allow this statement to be true in general, yet we claim exemption for the Order of Citeaux. The ground work of the Cistercian Order is the Rule of the illustrious Patriarch of the west, St. Benedict; who concludes the Preface to his Rule with these words: "We now, therefore, institute a school, in which may be learnt the service of the Lord; and in which we hope there will be found no yoke that is grievous, no burden that is too heavy. If, however, some things appear stricter than sound reason may warrant, remember that they are intended for the correction of vice, and the preservation of charity; and do not, on this account, yield to the suggestions of fear, and forthwith abandon the path of salvation which is always narrow and difficult at the commencement. But by perseverance in holy conversation and fidelity, the heart is dilated with ineffable gladness, and the zealous religious is enticed to march joyfully onwards in the way of God's commandments; so that never departing from the school of this infinitely wise Master, we may continue in the monastery steadfast unto death, in the practice of His heavenly doctrine, and deserve by our patience in carrying our cross, to participate in His eternal glory."

Now the school of Evangelical Perfection will never become antiquated, will never cease to claim the attention of fervent and active disciples. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but Christ's words shall not pass away. The chief lessons taught in this divine school are voluntary poverty, perpetual chastity, and entire obedience. The means of carrying out these lessons into daily practice are, according to the instructions of St. Benedict.

1st. The union of a brotherhood in the common bond of charity, subject by a childlike simplicity and obedience to a superior.

2nd. The silence of the tongue, save in matters necessary for the government of the monastery, and to superiors.

3rd. The humiliation of the body by a plain and frugal diet, a coarse and homely garment.

4th. The elevation and assimilation of the soul to the spirits in Heaven by contemplation, prayer, and chanting the divine office, which are appropriately termed the special work of God.

These lessons will retain their force to the end of the world; and the means by which they are to be made practicable will always be at the command of those who receive a divine vocation to this higher state of perfection. At least this was the opinion of St. Gregory the Great. We place before the reader his own words: "I, Gregory, Bishop of the Holy Roman Church, have written the life of Blessed Benedict, and have read the rule which the Saint wrote with his own hand. I have commended and confirmed it in a sacred synod. I have also commanded in divers parts of Italy, and wherever the Latin language may be spoken, that all who are about to enter upon the work of conversion most diligently practise it; even to the end of the world. And I confirm the twelve monasteries which the saint himself founded." *

* Ego Gregorius Sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ Præsul, Scripsi vitam

Again, in his Dialog, lib. 2. cap. 36, he says:—

"You must know that Benedict, the man of God, has not been less eminent by his knowledge and by his writings, than by the number of his miracles. For he has composed a rule, in which we can not desire greater clearness, and greater prudence. So that he who wishes to be thoroughly instructed in the deeds of this great Saint has only to study this rule, and he will find it a faithful mirror of the Saint's life and manners."

The council of Autun over which presided St. Leger, in the year 670, Can. 15, gives these instructions:—

"With regard to abbots and their religious, it is proper that they should observe faithfully whatever is prescribed by the canons, and in St. Benedict's rule. If they do this, God will daily augment their numbers, and deliver, through the intercession of their unceasing prayers, the Church from a deluge of evils which inundate it."

The second council of Douzy, in the year 874, states:—

"Benedict, as illustrious by his name as by the gifts of the Holy Spirit who inspired him, has enforced nothing in his rule which is not conformable to the Holy Scripture, and to the writings of the Holy Fathers."

St. Antonius, part 2. tit. 15. chap. 12. § 2, makes these remarks:—

"The rule of St. Basil is embarrassed;—that of St. Augustine is too vague, and does not enter sufficiently into detail;—that of St. Francis is too short, and consequently the greater part of the observances which it prescribes lead to scrupulosity: but the rule of St. Benedict is clear, easy, and sufficiently explanatory." [Vide Calmet's "Commentaire Literal, Historique, et Moral

beati Benedicti: et legi Regulam, quam ipse Sanctus manu propriâ scripsit. Laudavi eam, et confirmavi in Sancta Synodo: et per diversas partes Italiæ, et ubicumque Latinæ literæ legerentur, præcepi ut diligentissime observarent quicumque ad conversionis gratiam accessuri essent: usque in finem mundi. Et Confirmo duodecim Monasteria, quæ ipse sanctus construxit.

sur la Règle de St. Benoit," at the commencement, for further testimonies, &c.]

This rule of a holy life, which St. Gregory so highly extolled, soon obtained the distinguished appellation of the Holy Rule. Kings and secular princes carefully studied its wise and prudent maxims, and drew from them much important counsel in the government of their dominions. The streams of this heavenly fountain, from the moment they gushed from Mount Cassino, have never ceased to flow and diffuse their living waters throughout the garden of the monastic state. [See Appendix, A.]

The Cistercian constitutions did not change anything in the wise, prudent, and inspired rule of St. Benedict; but merely surrounded it by such protective regulations as were necessary for its due observance, and perpetuity. St. Stephen "filled up a want which St. Benedict's rule did not, and indeed was not intended to supply, and that was the internal arrangement of a body of monasteries connected with each other. St. Benedict legislated for a monastery. Stephen for an order. The idea of the great patriarch of western monks was, that each monastery was to be a monarchy under its abbot; no abbey, as far as the rule of St. Benedict goes, is in any way connected with another. In one extraordinary case the abbots of neighbouring monasteries may be called in to interfere in the election of an abbot [Mabillon. Præf. in sec. 5.]; but in general each monastery was an independent community. This rude and imperfect system of government was the ruin of monastic institutions; the jurisdiction of bishops was utterly inadequate to keep refractory monks in order, or preserve monastic discipline in its purity. So entirely had the rule of St. Benedict, at one time, disappeared from France, that its very existence before the time of St. Odo, of Cluny, has been questioned." [Cister. Saints, St. Steph. ch. xvii.]

Now the present times are more favourable to the

execution of the Chart of Charity (which is the Cistercian's security for due observance of rule,) than any previous period since the commencement of the Order of Citeaux. The facility of travelling has rendered the assemblage of the General Chapter a matter of easy accomplishment, in comparison of former ages. It now requires no longer time to sail from America to France, than it did, in the 13th century, to journey from England to Citeaux.

The objection, that in the present state of the Church in England, active and not contemplative life is required in religious communities,—we have already noticed at sufficient length in the concluding portion of the introduction. We will, however, briefly add, that there never was a period in this country, when the prayers of the recluse, of the pious brotherhood in the desert, were more needed, or were more likely to be beneficial than the present. How many thousands in this Island are convinced of the truth of the Catholic Church; and yet have not the courage,—the crowning grace, necessary to conduct them within its fold? And what will conquer this pusillanimity, save Divine grace obtained by fervent prayer? We subjoin the following confirmation of our statement from the Life of Father Antony: "Many ecclesiastics who, during a long period, had exercised the holy and sublime functions of the priesthood, joined the community at Melleray; and thereby came to the holy mountain, to elevate with Moses their hands to the God of mercy, after they had born the brunt of the battle with Josue in the plains. These generous ministers of God knew that their prayers and penances, in the solitude of their cloister, would be available to the salvation of souls, and draw down upon the labours of their fellow soldiers whom they had left in the battle field, a thousand benedictions. St. Teresa, as we are assured by a tradition and special revelation, worthy of credit, obtained by her prayers, and without departing from the cloister, the con-

version of as many souls as St. Xavier did in the Indies, and in Japan." [Vide du R. P. D. Antoine, Abbé de la Trappe de Melleray.]

"St. Bernard, to those who affirmed that a life of contemplation was a lazy life, thought it sufficient to reply, 'Otiosum non est vacare Deo, sed negotium negotiorum omnium.' It is not idleness to be employed for God, but the employment of employments." [Mores Catholici, Book x. p. 479.]

St. Stephen was well nigh being crushed by the clamours of relaxation which arose on every side of the desert of Citeaux. His faith, at times, all but failed. It required a messenger from heaven to inspire him with confidence, and to assure him that his institute was pleasing in the sight of God.

From the days of Gregory the Great, to the present venerable successor of St Peter, the Roman Pontiffs have always most cheerfully and most solemnly sanctioned the strict observance of St. Benedict's Rule. The fact is too notorious to require proof. "The Roman Church," says Leo IX. "forbids no monastery to preserve its paternal tradition or institute; but on the contrary highly commends and even prescribes its observance." Amidst the objections which were urged by every class of persons, members of his own Order, bishops, priests, and influential laity, against the reform which was introduced into La Trappe, the undaunted De Rancé consulted upon the subject twelve doctors of Sorbonne, the curate of St. Stephen of the Mount, the chancellor of the university of Paris, the general of the congregation of St. Maur, the prior of the Great Convent of the Jacobins, a Father of the Oratory, and the Abbot of Prières. These persons all eminent for their piety and their erudition, took counsel together and gave unanimously the following decision: "We, the undersigned Doctors of Theology, are of opinion, that Religious who have made their profession according to

the Rule of St. Benedict, and have expressly mentioned this Rule in the enunciation of their vows, and in the same terms which the Rule prescribes, may oblige themselves to live according to the precise practices or dictates of that Rule: in like manner, they can oblige themselves to follow the usages of Citeaux, or the definitions of ancient chapters, which are conformable to the primitive spirit of the Order; so that no superior authority can compel them to depart from this Rule. For authority has been given for edification, not destruction, to lead souls onwards in the path of strict observance of the Rule, and to preserve the primitive spirit of the Order, as much as possible; not to become relax and fall away from that spirit."* Paris, 15th of July, 1672.

We beg also to present to the pious reader these excellent observations of St. Theresa: —

"What an excellent example did God lately take from us, in the person of that blessed man, Father Peter of Alcantara! The world was no longer able to endure such perfection. Men say that our health is now not so good, and that we cannot live now as people did in former times. But that holy man lived in our time, and yet he had as fervent a spirit as men had in other days, and he trod the world no less under his feet; for though we do not go barefoot, nor do such austere penances as he did, yet there are many ways whereby we may tread the world under our feet. Our Lord will teach us these ways, when He finds a soul fit to learn them. And how great a soul did God bestow on this saint of whom I am now speaking, to enable him to continue for 47 years, a course of such sharp and rigorous penance as all know his to have been!" [St. Theresa's Life, translated by the Rev. J. Dalton, p. 235.]

We possess, in addition to this evidence and authority,

* "Les Trappistes ou L'Ordre de Citeaux, au XIXe Siècle. Vol. i. p. 154.

the living example of sixteen houses, some of them numerous, telling the world in the silent eloquence of daily practice, that the Rule of St. Benedict may be carried out to the letter, without detriment to the health, or injury to the constitution. We can point to our cemeteries; and there may be read the average life of mankind upon our gravestones. We can introduce the incredulous to our octogenarians, that they may listen to these unquestionable witnesses in vindication of our holy Rule. [On the subject of Fasting, we refer our readers to Alban Butler's "Moveable Feasts and Fasts." and to Dr. Forster's "Simplex Medicina."]

But the pious reader is desired to remember, that, in Cistercian Houses, the Abbot has the power to "temper the wind to the shorn lamb." He can modify the Rule to the weak, and direct the energies of the strong. This discretionary power is not merely left to his choice, but absolutely enforced as a sacred duty. "Let the Abbot have a special care that the cellarian or servitors neglect not the sick, because, whatsoever is done amiss by his disciples, is imputed to him." [Ch. XXXVI.] "To brethren of weak and tender constitution, let such work or art be enjoined, as is suitable, to keep them from idleness, without oppression or weariness. Hence let the Abbot consider well their weakness, that they may not be driven away from the monastery by too much labour." [Ch. XLVIII. See likewise the decree of Greg. XVI. which we have already given, and which in this matter has been confirmed by Pius IX.]

Let not the timid, therefore, who believe they hear a voice from heaven calling them to a state of solitude, penance, and contemplation, be daunted by anything they may have read or heard, concerning the austerities of the Cistercian Institute. "Many things are scattered up and down St. Bernard's writings, which show that a Rule without the living tradition, is not fully intelligible. For

instance, from scattered hints, it appears, that the monks had sometimes a certain time allowed them for conversing together, though that is not mentioned at all in St. Benedict's Rule." Unless this sentence from the chapter on silence indicate it. "Let the permission to speak be seldom granted, even to perfect disciples, on good, too, and holy subjects, tending to edification." [Ch. VI.] "The fact is, that silence was the general order of the day, but the Abbot might allow those whom he judged fit to converse together.* In after ages, and not so long after St. Stephen's time, these conversations were systematized, and placed at set hours ; but before then, they seem to have been at the discretion of the Abbot. How naked and dead are the words of a Rule, without the living Abbot to dispense them, to couple together the strong and the weak, that the sturdy warrior may help on the trembling soldier, and to mingle the roughness of discipline with the tender hand which drops oil and wine on the wounded heart." [Cistercian Saints, St. Stephen, ch. xv.] But we have detained the reader too long from his visit to Charnwood Forest.

[* V. Calmet, c. 6. St. Bern. Serm. de Diversis, 17, et Benedictine, note ; also de Grad. Superbiæ, 13. Also Speculum Monachorum, in the Benedictine St. Bernard, written by Arnulphus, a monk of Bohéries, who flourished in the latter part of the twelfth century. The master of the novices held frequent conversations with them. Vide, Adam of Perseigne, in Baluzius Misc. vol. ii, 236.]

CHAPTER XVI.

CHARNWOOD FOREST. EXTENT. NAME. DRUIDICAL RESIDENCE. ROMAN STATION. COINS. WELL WOODED IN ANCIENT TIMES. ENCLOSURE. BEAUTIFUL VIEWS. BEACON AND BARDON HILLS. RELIGIOUS HOUSES. ALDERMAN'S HAW. CHARLEY PRIORY. ULVERSCROFT PRIORY. GARENDON ABBEY. GRACE DIEU CONVENT. HOLYWELL HERMITAGE. GEOLOGY, &c.

Charnwood Forest is a district about ten miles in length, six in breadth, twenty-five in circumference, lying upon the north-west side of the county of Leicester, and comprising a considerable portion of the triangle formed by the towns of Leicester, Loughborough and Ashby-de-la-Zouch. This was anciently one of the royal forests, and finally disafforested by Henry III.

[Note. The whole of this chapter is little more than an extract or a compendium of the elaborate and excellent "History of Charnwood Forest, with illustrations, by T. R. Potter. A work which deserves great praise for the great depth of research displayed in its details, for sound discrimination in the choice of facts, and candour, tempered by charity, in all that regards religion.]

The name of Charnwood is probably derived from quern, a hand-mill; as rough stones suitable for making these mills were found in many parts of the Forest. Dr. Gale, however, thinks the name derived from guern, an alder; and this tree is still found in many parts of Charnwood.

Vague assertions, that the forest was one of the favoured haunts of Druidism, may be found in several writers; but Mr. Potter, in his History of the Forest, brings strong evidence in support of the statement. That a district,

possessing so many natural temples and groves, was peculiarly adapted to Druid rites, will be generally and readily admitted. The strongholds of these priests of the ancient Britons have been almost invariably found in rocks and secluded places, as on Dartmoor, in the Peak of Derbyshire, in Wales, and in the landes of Brittany. Mr. Potter adduces in evidence, that the gross idolatry and horrid superstitions of the Druids were practised within the secret recesses of Charnwood, the etymology of the names of places surrounding the forest, and which have not been changed or corrupted, since the earliest written records of the locality; the cromlechs or hanging stones, the querns or hand-mills, found either on the forest, or in the neighbourhood.

"Near to Woodhouse Eaves is a kind of rude stone table, about five yards long, and two wide. There are strong reasons for believing it was placed there by art, as it lies horizontally, and on a different level from the surrounding masses, and its supporters seem to have been artificially placed. This may have been a sacrificial altar. A curious circle of stones may be found on the hill above this altar." Not far from the site of the present monastery of Mount St. Bernard, is a spot which, before the enclosure of the forest, went by the name of "the Grove." It may, in early times, have been a grove to some temple, or to the Hanging Stone Cromlech.

Charnwood formed part of the ancient Celtic Forest of Arden, which extended from the Avon to the Trent, the Leicestershire portion of which was bounded on the east by a line running through High Cross to Barton, in Nottinghamshire. That the Romans were well acquainted with it is a fact placed beyond conjecture, by the circumstance that a Roman road intersected the forest; by the recent discoveries of Roman coins and earthenware; and by the station or stations, which, it is presumed, will be

acknowledged to have been fixed on one or more of the hills in the forest range.

In June 16th, 1840, as the monks of Mount St. Bernard were ploughing a piece of land, which they were reclaiming from the waste, the ploughshare came in contact with a large earthen vessel, of peculiar mould, which proved to be of Roman manufacture. In this vessel was discovered a large collection of ancient coins, matted together in a most singular manner, measuring twenty-two inches in circumference, and weighing about twelve pounds. In this lump there could not have been fewer than two thousand coins, many of which were in admirable preservation, and the inscriptions very legible. They bore the names of Gallienus, Postumus, Victorinus, &c. Besides the coins, there was discovered a small arrow or spear-head, three inches long. Also a small round article, having the appearance of a Roman lamp, and composed of terra-cotta. Pieces of Roman vases, and fragments of pottery, were found in great abundance.

In addition to the evidence afforded by the discovery of these coins, spear, vases, &c., on the south, east, and west, of the first building erected by the Monks of St. Bernard, and now called the Grange, there are still visible several ancient mounds ; one forty yards by eight, and enclosed by a trench, having all the appearance of a Roman military work. Connecting this mound with the coins, and the situation of the spot, (on a line between two undisputed stations) there can be little doubt about a Roman military post in this neighbourhood.

To persons totally unacquainted with the district called Charnwood Forest, the word " Forest " will convey very erroneous ideas of the locality. " Why is Charnwood, in which there is scarcely a tree, called a " Forest ?" asked one who had long lived within the shadow of its beautiful hills. It may be simply answered, there was a time when those bare hills, as well as the valleys at their feet, were

covered with majestic oaks,—when to use the words of an old tradition,—"a squirrel might be hunted six miles without once touching the ground ; and when a traveller might journey from Beaumanor to Bardon, on a clear summer's day, without seeing the sun. The names of Woodhouse, Woodthorpe, the Outwoods, Timberwood hills, and Charnwood, are all plainly indications of a period, when the Forest was clothed with wood. Leland states that, in his time, (about 1550) this Forest "hadde plentye of woode."

Dr. Corbett, Bishop of Oxford, who wrote in the 17th century, (about 1620) mentions in his Iter Septentrionale, that he and his companions were lost in the mazes of Charley Forest, on their route to Bosworth Field.

Nichols believes that, in the 16th and 17th centuries, great quantities of timber were certainly growing; citing in proof of it the prevailing tradition, and the concurrent testimony of ancient people.

A still stronger proof of the abundance of timber on Charnwood, in the 17th century, may be found in an original document at Beaumanor, (1673) which states that "William Heyrick, Esq., sold to Humphery Jennens, Esq., 6090 oak and ash trees, within Beaumanor liberty, on the Forest of Charnwood, for the sum of £1,178." The elder trees, crab trees, and hollies, with alder trees growing along the Carr Brook, were to be left standing, and twelve years allowed for clearance.

The acorn harvest and pannage for hogs, of which we find frequent mention in the old conveyances of property bordering on the Forest, are proofs that Charnwood was not only well wooded, but that it abounded in oaks. A poet's testimony to the sylvan beauties of Charnwood, in the 17th century, may not inappropriately be introduced here. The description acquires additional value, from the circumstance of the writer having been a visitor at Beau-

manor and Garendon, and consequently thoroughly acquainted with the Forest.

> "O Charnwood, be thou called the choicest of thy kind:
> The like, in any place, what flood hath hapt to find?
> * * * * *
> Who will describe to life a forest, let him take
> Thy surface to himself—nor shall he need to make
> Another form at all, where oft in thee are found,
> Fine sharp but easy hills, which reverently are crown'd
> With aged antique oaks, to which thy goats and sheep
> (To him that stands remote) do softly seem to creep,
> To gnaw the little shrubs on their steep sides that grow;
> Upon whose other part, on some descending brow,
> Huge stones are hanging out, as tho' they down would drop,
> Where undergrowing oaks on their shoulders prop
> The others' hoary heads; which still seem to decline."
>
> DRAYTON'S POLYOLBION.

Crow Hill, near Woodhouse Eaves, probably took its name from a rookery. The old trees, many of them twenty feet in circumference, were sold by an Earl of Stamford to the charcoal burners at Melbourn, and after being charred on the Forest, the charcoal was removed in bags laid on horses.—(Nichols.)

Bens Cliff, near Maplewell, was known to have been covered with oaks about 1745. From this period the Copt Oak, the Outwoods, White-Horse-Wood, the oaks growing in Bradgate Park, and about Charley Hall, are nearly the only vestiges of the Ancient Forest.

In 1794, Mr. Monk, in his Agricultural Report for Leicestershire, stated that "Charnwood Forest contains about 15,000, or 16,000 acres," (other authorities estimated it at 18,000, and 20,000 acres,) "three-fourths of which might be made into very useful land; and if enclosed would make some valuable farms. It is the opinion of those who are well acquainted with every part of it, that there is not a single acre which is not capable of improvement. If the hills were planted, and the other

parts enclosed, it would be a wonderful improvement to the county."

It is probable that this Report had considerable weight in confirming the wavering opinions of the proprietors with regard to the advantages of enclosure. An Act of enclosure obtained the Royal Assent in 1808. This Act, it has been said, increased the value of some land thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred-fold.

The views from the various hills are extensive, varied, and exceedingly interesting. "Mount yon pile of grey rocks,—look round you on wood and wold,—on tower and town,—on many a happy home, with its coloured fringe of timber,—on the cloudless, boundless, and all covering sky," and say, where is the like of such a landscape? The Beacon Hill is wonderful at all times, but lovely beyond expression, at sunrise and sunset are views from this eminence.

> "Over a hill of golden-blossomed furze,
> Above the straggling fern, when now with toil
> Of straining limbs he gains the beaconed top—
> Looks over into valleys wonderful—
> Thick-timbered valleys, with their fair church towers
> Stretched into hazy distance, till a blank
> Of light-blue hills, with outline gently curved,
> Stands up before the sunset!"
>
> REV. H. ALFORD.

Those "bright blue hills" are the Peak of Derbyshire; and from the "far-west" the eye travels over Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, to the towers of Belvoir—to the borders of Rutland—to Leicester—to Bradgate—till, wearied with the countless objects that crowd upon it, or arrested by some underlying town or holy fane, it yields awhile its functions, and leaves the mind to enjoy the images it has conveyed to it.

Bardon Hill, however, has been styled the "Olympus of Leicestershire."

——————"We reserved
The tribute of our homage till arrived;
Turning our eyes away from where we felt
Sublimity was enthroned, to contemplate
The beautiful which we had left behind
Reposing in the valleys."

Mr. Marshall, the author of "The Agriculture of the Midland Counties" gives the following just description of Bardon and the forest range: "The Charnwood hills are too striking a feature to be passed over without special notice. When seen obscurely they appear like an extensive range of mountains, much larger than they really are. When approached, the mountain style is preserved, the prominences are sharp, distinct, and most of them pointed with rugged rocks. One of these prominences, Bardon Hill, rises above the rest: and though far from an elevated situation, it probably commands a greater extent of surface than any other point of view in the island. It is entirely insulated, standing, in every way, at a considerable distance from lands equally high. The horizon appears to rise almost equally on every side: it is quite an ocean view, from a ship out of sight of land. The Midland district, almost every acre of it is seen lying at its feet. The Sugar Loaf, in South Wales—the mountains of Shropshire and North Wales are distinctly in view; and the Derbyshire hills, to the highest Peak, appear at hand. An outline, described from the extremity of this view, would include nearly one-fourth of England and Wales. It may be deemed one of the most extraordinary points of view in Nature."

The following religious and monastic foundations anciently existed either on the forest or in the environs. Alderman's Haw, Charley Priory, Ulverscroft Priory, Garendon Abbey, Grace Dieu Convent, and Holy Well Hermitage.

ALDERMAN'S HAW. In the year 1082, Aylwin Child, a

rich citizen of London, founded in Southwark, a fair church and monastery, placing therein some Cluniac monks, from the Priory De Charitate in France. He obtained for it the manor of Bermondsey; and by his exertions the new monastery was enriched with many benefactions. The Haw is a small farm house on the forest, standing low on a brooklet, surrounded by a few fields of old enclosure. It was at one time under the patronage of the prior of the above-mentioned priory; and in 1220, according to the Matriculus of the Bishop of Welles, the prior was accustomed to have three monks at the Haw. It had, however, ceased to have any resident religious long before the dissolution.

Charley Priory. Robert Blanchmaines, Earl of Leicester, built in the reign of Henry II. in the quiet vale of Charley, a small Priory, and dedicated it to the Blessed Virgin. He placed in it three friars, hermits of the Order of St. Augustine. Sir John Bouchier, who married Elizabeth, widow of Edward Lord Ferrars, consented with his lady, in 1465, to the union of this Priory with Ulverscroft.

Ulverscroft Priory. This Priory was founded by Robert Bossu, Earl of Leicester, (father of the preceding,) for Hermits of the Order of St. Augustine. In 1525, King Henry VIII. gave a lease for twenty-one years of the manor of Cheylesmore, Warwick, to Geoffrey Whalley, Prior of Ulverscroft. This favour is said to have been conferred in return for the hospitable entertainment afforded to Henry on his being benighted in the forest.

In the dissolution of the smaller abbeys, 1534, Ulverscroft was included; but either on account of the reception given to the sovereign, or through the following recommendation from one of the commissioners for visiting Religious Houses, addressed to the Lord Cromwell, the order for its suppression was rescinded, and it was refounded by Henry VIII.

"The sure knowledge I have had always in your indifference, giveth me boldness to write to you in the favour of the house of Woulstorp; the governor whereof is a very good husband for the house, and well beloved of all the inhabitants thereunto adjoining; a right honest man, having eight religious persons being priests, of right good conversation and living religiously, having sincere qualities of virtue as we have not found the like in no other place; for there is not one religious person there but that he can and doth use either embrothering, or writing books with very fair hand, making their own garments, carving, painting, graffying; the house without any slander or evil fame, and standing in a waste ground, very solitary, keeping such hospitality, that, except by singular good provision, it could not be maintained with half so much land more as they may spend; such a number of the poor inhabitants nigh thereunto, daily relieved, that we have not seen the like, having no more land than they have. God be ever my judge, as I do write unto you the truth, and none otherwise to my knowledge, which very pity causeth me to write! The premises whereof considered, in most humble wise I beseech you, to be a mean unto the King his Majesty, for the standing of the said Woulstorp, whereby his Grace shall do a much gracious and meritorious act for the relief of his poor subjects there; and ye shall be sure not only to have the continual prayers of those religious persons there, but also the hearty prayer of all the inhabitants within four or five miles about that house. &c., &c.

"From Garendon, the XIX day of June,
"Your bounden bedeman at commandment,
"GEORGE GYFFARD."

The letters patent dated the 30th of January, 1536—7, for the re-establishment of Ulverscroft state: "the said

Priory of Alwayscroft, of the Order of St. Augustine, shall for ever continue in its same body corporate, and without suppression or dissolution." Notwithstanding this, the Prior and his brethren were compelled to deliver up the Priory into the King's hands. Sept. 15th. 1539.

"The remains of the Priory," says the Rev. Andrew Bloxam, "are the finest of the kind in Leicestershire; and the lofty tower, with the combination of ruins, when viewed from the surrounding hills, presents a scene of highly picturesque beauty." But little of the original building, erected in the time of Henry II. now remains; nearly the whole of the present edifice being of the decorated style, which prevailed in the fourteenth century.

GARENDON ABBEY. Garendon Abbey was founded by Robert de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, surnamed Bossu or humpbacked, A. D. 1133. It was rebuilt on a fresh site in 1169. The abbey was founded for the Cistercian Order, and consequently dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. It was a filiation from Waverly Abbey, Surrey; it afterwards became of considerable importance. From 1292 to 1391, the abbot was regularly summoned to sit in Parliament. It obtained "peculiar and especial" grants and privileges from Popes Lucius II., Alexander IV., and Anastasius III.

At the dissolution, 1536, it was occupied by the abbot and fourteen monks. The annual rental or value of the land situated within the liberty of Garendon, subjected to certain reductions or charges, was £186. 15s. 2d.; it would now be worth £3,735. It was granted in 1540, by Henry VIII., to Thomas, Earl of Rutland. In 1682, Sir Ambrose Phillipps, King's Sergeant to his Majesty Charles II., bought it and the manor of Sheppeshed for £28,000.

GRACE DIEU CONVENT. This convent was founded for fourteen nuns and a prioress, by the Lady Roesia de Verdon, 1240. The nuns were of the Order of St.

Augustine; and the convent was dedicated to the honour of St. Mary and the Blessed Trinity.

In the year 1534, the commissioners appointed by the writ of Henry VIII., visited Grace Dieu. They were Dr. Leigh, and Dr. Layton, and John Beaumont, Esq., of the adjoining parish of Thringstone; three individuals whose testimony will not be received into good society at the present day. They accuse the sisterhood of a grievous violation of their religious vows. "But, happily for their posthumus reputation," says Mr. Potter, "the report of the commissioners presents, on the face of it, strong reasons for doubting its accuracy. It contains gross misstatements. It makes "Dominus Ferys," instead of Roesia de Verdon, the founder; it fixes the annual revenue at nearly £30 under the valuation given in Speed—it appraises the goods and cattle belonging to the Priory at prices which, even for those times, where unprecedentedly low, and all this for a reason that cannot be mistaken.

Then one of the Commissioners, (alas that he should have borne the noble name of Beaumont!) subsequently proved himself utterly unworthy of all credibility, (we have given the character of the other two in the Introduction) having confessed to forgeries and "misdemeanours" against Lady Powis and the state, to the amount of £20,861. He was, besides, a party most deeply interested in procuring a false report of this Nunnery, as is proved by having had conveyed to him, "the very next day after the surrender," the whole of the site of the Priory and the demesne lands!

Again, Catherine Hall and Catharine Cheseldyne, notwithstanding the charge of incontinence, were pensioned off at the dissolution with the largest pensions allowed to Nuns: to which they certainly could have had no claim after a proved violation of their vow.

The Abbey of Grace Dieu, now only a heap of ruins, is situated in a secluded little valley on the edge of the

Western Forest. These ruins, next to Ulverscroft, may be pronounced the most picturesque in the county; even though havoc was long at work despoiling them, and though they are now converted to ignoble uses. The ground-plan can still be traced; even the boundary of the garden, which, Burton says "the Nuns made in resemblance of that upon Mount Olivet Gethsemane," is still defined. The spot, from its beauty as well as its associations, was often a favourite haunt of Wordsworth, who thus describes it in his verses:

> "Beneath yon eastern Ridge, the craggy Bound,
> Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest ground;
> Stand yet, but, stranger! hidden from thy view,
> The ivied Ruins of forlorn Grace Dieu;
> Erst a religious House, which day and night
> With hymns resounded, and the chanted rite;

and who, in the Dedication of his "Poetical Works" to the late Sir George Beaumont, thus speaks of it, and of the inspiration he caught there: "Several of the best pieces were composed under the shade of your own groves, upon the classic ground of Cole Orton, where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious Poets of your name and family who were born in that neighbourhood; and we may be assured, did not wander with indifference by the dashing stream of Grace Dieu, and among the rocks that diversify the forest of Charnwood.".

The Manor of Grace Dieu was purchased by Sir Ambrose Phillipps, of Garendon, about the year 1683, from the executors of Sir John Beaumont, the last of that name that resided at Grace Dieu: and for some generations the Phillipps family made it their occasional residence. Towards the middle of the last century, the old Manor House was left to go to ruin, and the park was subdivided into various closes. But in 1833, Ambrose Lisle Phillipps,

Esq., the eldest son of Charles March Phillipps, Esq., of Garendon Park, Knight of the shire for the county of Leicester in several successive Parliaments, rebuilt the Manor House in the Gothic style, and made it his residence. The Catholic Chapel, which forms part of the Mansion, is admired for the elegance of its design and decorations, which are the work of the celebrated architect, Augustus Welby Pugin, Esq.

Holy-Well Haw.

"A little, lowly Hermitage it was,
Down in a dell, hard by a Forest side,
Far from resort of people that did pass
In travel to and fro! A little wide
There was a little chapel edified,
Wherein the Hermit duly went to say
His holy things, each morn and eventide;
Thereby a crystal stream did gently play,
Which from a sacred fountain welled forth away."

Spenser's Faery Queene. Book I.

Holy-well Haw, once a lonely little Hermitage, but now a farmhouse, on the borders of the Forest, derives part of its name from a well, to the waters of which, even in recent times, considerable virtues have been attributed. The adjunct Haw simply signifies an enclosure. The precise date of the foundation has not been clearly ascertained; it existed, however, as a Hermitage, previously to 1180, as appears by the grant of Robert de Jort, by whom it was, perhaps, originally erected as a sort of Hospitium for wayfarers crossing the Forest. It ceased to have any resident religious long before the Reformation.

Charnwood Forest lies, as we have already stated, within the circle of the three towns of Leicester, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and Loughborough. It comprises a cluster

of hills which rise boldly, although to no great elevation, above the surrounding country, having well-marked features, not only contrasting with the adjacent plain, but differing one from the other. We should, without any previous knowledge of its structure, distinguish the rounded and massive forms of its siennitic hills, from the lighter and more delicate outline of the slates, and these from the rough and craggy ridges bristling with rocks of the porphyries and greenstones. Its aspect, therefore, alone, is sufficient to assure the geologist that he will find something in it of interest, since he knows that every feature and outline of the surface of the earth depends either on the nature of the rock within, or the conditions under which it has been placed, both of which things it is his object and hope to discover. To the geological student indeed, especially to one who has never studied the lower or older rocks, the district of Charnwood Forest offers peculiar advantages ; he here gets, within a small space, a sufficient number of the most striking characters of the slate rocks, and their associates, neatly exposed and arranged, without being overwhelmed by the accumulated difficulties and novelties of the larger and loftier districts of Wales, Cumberland, or Cornwall.

The physical geography of Charnwood Forest is seen by a glance at the ordinance map of the district ; it consists of some ranges of low hills, running nearly N. N. W. and S. S. E., and some detached or projecting masses. The two highest points are Bardon Hill and Beacon Hill, each of which rises about eight hundred and fifty feet above the sea, and about seven hundred above the level of the Soar at Leicester. The general level of the surrounding country is about two hundred feet above the level of the Soar ; so that, on approaching the boundaries of the Forest, the sensible height of its two highest points is about five hundred feet. This will not apply, however,

to Bardon Hill, as viewed from the Ashby-de-la-Zouch side: the coal-field of that neighbourhood is also above the general level of the surrounding country, and Bardon Hill only rises three hundred and fifty feet above the level of the railway at Snibston.

The wonderful changes in the effects of the Forest landscapes, caused by the variations of the atmosphere, can scarcely have failed to be noticed by any who are at all acquainted with the district. These changes, during March and April, are so striking and so varied, that they often fill the mind with rapt astonishment! At one period, a fog, acting as a magnifier, throws an uncertainty and even a witchery over the hills that are singularly pleasing. At another, snow may be observed lying on the mountain tops, while verdure and warm sunshine cheer the valleys. Then appearances very like what are called "dissolving views," present themselves. Often, the mists brood on the steep hill sides, while the peaks are gilt with the rising or setting sun. Again, the peaks are hidden in a cap of clouds, while the slopes and low grounds are all brightness.

> "And now the mists from earth are clouds in heaven:
> Clouds slowly castellating in a calm
> Sublimer than a storm: while brighter breathes
> O'er the whole firmament the breadth of blue,
> Because of the excessive purity
> Of all those hanging snow-white palaces."
>
> WILSON.

The rainbow, always grand and vivid in mountain districts, is peculiarly imposing on Charnwood. The purple haze which often invests the Forest hills is likewise exceedingly beautiful.

The forest air claims our concluding remarks. No person can visit Charnwood without immediately becoming sensible that he is in a fresher and purer atmosphere than

that which surrounded him in the valleys. Invalids are quickly aware of the bracing effect of the Forest breezes, and persons affected with asthma find almost instantaneous relief. What is called "change of air" may, therefore, be enjoyed by the inhabitants of Leicestershire without going out of the county, and the change will probably be found as great and as efficacious as a removal to places a hundred miles distant.

CHAPTER XVII.

MOUNT ST. BERNARD, LEICESTERSHIRE. PURCHASE OF LAND. THE DONOR. SITUATION. THE NATURE OF THE LAND. THE FIRST DWELLING OF THE RELIGIOUS. COMPARISON BETWEEN THEN COMMECEMENT OF MOUNT ST. BERNARD AND CITEAUX. THE BEGINNING OF A NEW EDIFICE. THE OPENING OF THE CHURCH. THE SERMON PREACHED ON THE OCCASION, &c.

In the year 1833, Father Norbert Woolfrey was deputed by Father Vincent, the superior of Mount Melleray, in Ireland, to solicit the aid of the pious Catholics in England towards the completion of the new monastery which he was then erecting near Cappoquin, in the county of Waterford, and which we have mentioned in chapter xiii. Father Norbert visited, during his perambulations in England, the retired and romantic locality of Grace Dieu, in Leicestershire, and received a welcome and gracious reception from the truly Catholic and generous proprietor of the Manor House, Ambrose Lisle Phillipps, Esq. [The substance of this chapter will be given as much as possible from sources outside the monastery, and in the words of persons not members of the community, for reasons which the indulgent reader will readily understand and appreciate.]

The establishment of a Cistercian house in England was made the subject of conversation; and its feasibility warmly entertained. Father Norbert, after his departure from Grace Dieu, spoke confidently to his friends of beginning a foundation in this kingdom, once so favourable to

the Cistercian Institute, as soon as circumstances would warrant so important a measure.

A letter from Mr. Phillipps, dated the Feast of the Annunciation, 1835, thus details the first steps taken towards the object of Father Norbert's wishes:—"I sincerely rejoice to hear that you contemplate establishing yourself in this country. At the same time, I do not well understand what you seem to allude to in your letter. Do you mean that you have any prospect at present of being able to found a Cistercian monastery? Should this be the case, both I and Mrs. Phillipps would be much pleased, if you could be induced to carry your foundation into execution in this neighbourhood, affording, as it does, greater facilities and advantages for such a foundation than, perhaps, any other part of England. With reference to this, if you could pay us a visit here, we should be delighted to receive you, and any time that would be convenient to you would suit us, if only you would let us know beforehand. We thought that we might prevail upon you to come here for the Holy Week, and to remain with us Easter week, when we expect Bishop Walsh, with whom it would be very desirable to talk over our plans."

Immediately after this consultation, 227 acres of forest land were purchased, through the negociation of friends, from Thomas Gisborne, Esq., M.P. for the county of Derby, Not more than from thirty to forty acres were in a state of cultivation. The rest was moorland, covered with fern, gorse, heath, and beds of loose stones, with several bold projections of sharp-pointed and deeply cleft granite rock. The estate thus purchased is admirably situated for drainage, by the undulating nature of the surface, and for conveniency, both of tillage and carriage, having for its boundary on the north the road from Whitwick to Woodhouse; on the east, a road which crosses the forest at right angles with the preceding one; on the

south, the road from Whitwick to Markfield; and on the west, a patch of forest land which separates it from the village of Whitwick;—the whole boundary constituting a ring-fence of great seclusion and desirable solitude. "The lover of unmolested nature finds, from Pelder Tor to 'forlorn Grace-Dieu,' scenes which, when viewed for the first time, he can scarcely believe to belong to Leicestershire."

This "tract of wild desert land" was presented, after its purchase, to the Cistercian brotherhood, desirous of a home in England, by the noble generosity of Ambrose Lisle Phillipps, Esq., a zealous convert to the Catholic Faith, and whose paternal estates occupy a considerable portion of the adjacent valleys. We cannot pass over in silence the following coincidences, with respect both to the virtuous donor and the locality. Mr. Phillipps is descended from the De Lisles, who were great benefactors to the Cistercian Abbey of Garendon. It is also probable that the forest rights of the monks of Garendon extended as far as the "Tynte Meadows," that is, over a portion of land now in possession of the monks of Mount St. Bernard. (See Potter's History of Charnwood Forest.)

Father Vincent, Abbot of Mount Melleray in Ireland, gave his approbation to the new foundation, which was to be placed under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin and St. Bernard, and to be called Mount St. Bernard. It was regarded as a filiation from Melleray in France, since the brothers who were to commence it were from that monastery. The late venerable and pious bishop of the Midland district, Dr. Walsh, gave the undertaking his warm approbation and pecuniary assistance. Thus three hundred years after the destruction of the Cistercian House of Garendon by Henry VIII., a new abbey of the same venerable Order is founded almost upon the domains of the ancient one.

Brother Augustine was sent to take possession of a

cottage, about twelve feet by twenty, with two rooms below and two above, (inhabited by the poor man who rented the "Tynte Meadows,") and the new purchased land, on Michaelmas-day, 1835. Other brothers, Luke, Xavier, Cyprian, Placid, Simeon, &c., were sent in succession to join him, and form the infant community, over which Father Odillo Woolfrey, brother of Father Norbert, was appointed the Prior. In December, 1836, Father Bernard, the present abbot, came from France, and joined the small band of brothers, who, in number about nine, had only the "old half-ruined cottage" mentioned above, for their dwelling. "Here," says a gentleman who speaks as an eye-witness, "they were exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, so that on more than one occasion the snow actually penetrated through the ruinous roof, and fell upon them as they lay at night on their straw mattresses. And yet even here they commenced their holy practice of life. They rose at midnight to sing Matins and Lauds,—and never shall I forget that Easter morning (1837) on which, prompted by devotion, I rode to their humble dwelling, that I might hear the poor servants of Christ singing at the solemn midnight-hour the joyful alleluias in honour of our Lord's Resurrection. Never shall I forget that glorious invitatory 'Alleluia,' sung with all the sweetness of the simple Church melody."

St. Robert, St. Stephen, and their companions, on their arrival at Citeaux, found a small chapel for the use of the peasantry on the estate of Viscount Beaune,—plenty of timber wherewith to construct their new residence,—and also many willing hands to assist them in their pious undertaking. The descendants of St. Stephen found on Charnwood Forest no chapel,—no dwelling but the hut we have mentioned,—no timber awaiting the axe of the woodman, and no population in the neighbourhood, save one generally hostile to their holy purpose. Nay, they

were assailed by the Vicar of Whitwick with the charge of intruding into his parish, with entertaining sinister designs, and with being the harbingers of discord. They had, therefore, before them a bleak and dreary prospect. But the difficulties are not small which can daunt the Cistercian monk. And as the tempest-beaten mariner rejoices at his entrance into the harbour, so do the flourishing brotherhood forget the dark hour of their trial, and struggle for existence amidst the rocks and the heath of their new domain.

The charitable gifts of the faithful enabled them to erect and make fit for habitation—though not complete—a small portion of an intended monastery,—to be constructed in the Elizabethan style, from designs, by Mr. Railton, who had given plans for several edifices both on the forest and in the neighbourhood. By the same architect the chapel or church for the said monastery was finished shortly afterwards, and opened for divine service 11th of October, 1837. A visitor on the occasion gave the following description of the imposing ceremony in the Staffordshire Examiner, under the signature of Philalethes: "At an early hour on Wednesday morning, the bishop with his clergy, accompanied by Sir Charles Wolseley, in a court dress, and Mr. Ambrose Phillipps, who wore his uniform as deputy-lieutenant of the county, walked up by a beautiful private road from Grace Dieu to the entrance of the monastery land, a distance of above two miles. From this spot to the monastery there is a space of above a quarter of a mile; and over this, as being the private ground of the monks, the bishops and clergy were to walk in solemn procession. At the entrance of the monastery land there is a ruined hut, situated under a lofty grey rock of pointed granite; on all sides is spread a vast extent of wild uncultivated land covered with heath and fern, and beautifully interspersed with rocks, hills, and dales through the narrow glens of which may be seen distant glimpses of the

rich plains that surround the Charnwood Hills..... .His lordship and his reverend brethren vested themselves in the ruined hut; and never shall I forget the impression produced on my mind, when I beheld this train of venerable men ascend in their sacred vestments the steep hill which presents itself at the entrance of the monastery land. At the head of it the cross solemnly borne by the cross-bearer, in a cassock and surplice, between two acolytes in surplices, holding candlesticks with lighted tapers; after these came six other acolytes, two and two, in surplices: then a splendid banner of yellow satin damask, embroidered with silver, and the holy name of Jesus emblazoned in the centre, borne by Ambrose Lisle Phillipps, Esq., in the uniform mentioned above; then four ecclesiastics in cassocks and surplices, two and two; after whom Sir Charles Wolseley, Baronet, in a court dress, carried the banner of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which in appearance resembled the other banner; after that the rest of the clergy in cassocks and surplices, two and two, to the number of about thirty; then the subdeacon, deacon, and priest, and the Rev. Edward Huddleston, as assistant priest in a splendid cope; and, finally, his lordship the bishop, vested in full pontificals, with his mitre and crozier, and his train borne by an acolyte in a white surplice.

Nothing could be more favourable than the day; the sun cast a dazzling brightness on the embroidered vestments of the clergy; and as the procession slowly and majestically ascended the hill in the midst of numerous groups of people, who from all quarters had assembled to witness the impressive scene, I was carried back in imagination to the ages when all England was Catholic, and I was reminded of the sublime ceremonies I had formerly beheld in Catholic countries on the Continent. On the summit of the hill a most affecting scene occurred. The prior of the monastery, with his monks to the number of

sixteen, had come in procession to meet the bishop. Before them was borne the banner of the Passion of Christ, by a lay brother, between four acolyte boys in little brown habits. The choir monks were dressed in white habits and cowls, and the lay brothers in brown habits, according to the rule of the Cistercian Order. The monks here joined the procession, and immediately the whole train commenced singing the Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, until they reached the door of the monastery church, which the bishop blessed. The procession then entered the church, the beauty of the interior of which even surpassed my expectations. The length of the building is 86 feet by 25 wide, and 36 feet in height. The choir of the monks is separated from the nave by a beautiful screen; within which, on each side, are arranged the stalls, carved and painted oak. There are three altars and the high altar, ornamented with carving, adorned with a costly tabernacle, superbly gilded and covered in part with crimson velvet, richly embroidered with gold,—forms one of the most magnificent objects I ever beheld. Six gilt candlesticks are placed upon it, and between them are arranged bunches of artificial flowers made of shells by Madame, the Baroness de la Tocnay, a noble lady who lives at a chateau near Nantes, and who has been a great benefactress to the monastery. The Hon. and Rev. George Spencer preached the sermon, selecting for his subject the nature of the monastic state, on which he pronounced a most eloquent eulogium.* The

* We select the following extract from the excellent Sermon of the Hon. and Rev. G. Spencer, mentioned by the visitor:—"The counsels of the Gospel, my brethren, are distinguished, in the Catholic Church, from the precepts or commandments of the Gospel; and the two expressions sufficiently explain what the distinction is. The precepts of the Gospel mean all those holy laws which Jesus Christ has laid on all His disciples without exception. Now, whatever Jesus Christ has thus commanded, we all are obliged to obey; and we cannot disobey, even in one point, without incurring

sermon was published by the request of his lordship, Dr. Walsh, and the clergy and the laity present. "After mass the ladies had a luncheon prepared for them in the guest room, as no females are allowed to enter the monas-

the anger of Almighty God. But there are other things which we may do to please God, which He will magnificently reward; but which, nevertheless, are not necessary to be done by each. These things, we say, in the language of the Church, Jesus Christ does not command, but counsel or advise to be done. And though we say not, Cursed is he who does them not; yet we say, Blessed, thrice blessed, is he that does them. The chief of such works as these are included in what are called the three Evangelical counsels; which are voluntary poverty, perpetual chastity, and entire obedience. I must speak of these in detail; and, in doing so, show you how the principle which I have explained agrees with the word of God.....From the explanation which I have thus briefly given of the Evangelical counsels, you will observe that they may be practised by persons living in the ordinary commerce of the world. to a greater or a less extent, for a longer or a shorter time, as their devotion may prompt them. And, in whatever degree this be done, God will receive honour, and will not fail richly to reward those who thus show a zeal for His service. But you must observe that, in entering a religious order, a man obliges himself, by an irrevocable vow, to follow the Evangelical counsels for life; that is, for the love of God, he not only renounces for a time the possessions and the lawful pleasures of the world; not only gives up his liberty, when he might innocently use it, to a certain extent, and when he finds it agreeable; but solemnly binds himself never to call back the gift which he has made. Whatever prejudices the enemy of righteousness has put into the minds of men against religious vows, it is most evident that, by means of a solemn vow, the sacrifice we make of ourselves to God becomes more perfect, as much as a free gift is more valuable than a loan, or as conveying to another the possession of a field without reserve is a more liberal act than merely giving him the crop which it bears for one or two years. It is under such solemn vows that the members of this community devote themselves to a life of perfection, of which I have given you some outline. They here offer themselves in as complete a manner as can be done in this life, as victims to the honour of God. They here retreat from the ordinary cares, and ties, and distractions of the world, that they may securely work out their own salvation; in order that they may be burdensome to none, but, on the contrary, may have wherewithal themselves to

tery itself. The gentlemen partook of a monastic repast consisting of eggs and fruit, in the refectory of the monks; at the same time the monks took their own dinner, during which one of the brotherhood, according to custom, read a spiritual lecture. In the afternoon vespers were solemnly chaunted, and an admirable sermon on the danger of the abuse of divine grace, was preached by the Very Reverend Dr. Weedall, the president of Oscott College."

support the weak. And to give to them that are in need, they daily devote themselves to the labour of their hands. And you have witnessed with what zeal they exert themselves for the salvation of their brethren in every way consistent with the life of contemplation to which they are called; though it is chiefly by their prayers that they are to do them good, co-operating hereby with us, who are more particularly ordained for the active labours of the vineyard, and supplying our deficiencies in this point. And so, as it were, putting in our hands the victory over our adversaries, which, by our own wisdom and strength, we could never obtain; as Moses on the mountain did more by the lifting up of his hands, than Joshua's sword could do in the field, for the defeat of Amalek, (Exod. xvii. 11)"

CHAPTER XVIII.

FATHER BERNARD ORDAINED PRIEST. FATHER BENEDICT APPOINTED PRIOR. COMMENCEMENT OF THE PRESENT MONASTERY. LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE CHURCH.

POSTULANTS were now admitted to their novitiate, and the small band of brothers began to assume the appearance of a regular community. Father Bernard was ordained priest by Bishop Walsh, at Oscott, on the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, 1838. He had received minor orders many years previously at Melleray, in France; but timidity and the apprehension that he would not be able to acquire the requisite knowledge, had deterred him from proceeding to the high degrees of the ecclesiastical state. It was far from his own wish that he now resumed his studies, and prepared himself for the priestly office. He candidly stated his case to his superiors, and then calmly bowed to their decision. He was in his fifty-sixth year; and it appeared but little probable that he would ever be ordained Priest. The late pious and highly venerated Dr. Gentili, as may be seen in his life, lately published, told Father Bernard, a considerable time before his ordination, when parting from him at the Monastery guest room, that he would one day certainly be a priest, and that he would be ordained, moreover, on a Festival of the Blessed Virgin. He told him this in a firm and decisive tone, and not as a mere conjecture or probability. Indeed, probability and conjecture were against it.

In September 1839, Father Benedict Johnson, was

appointed superior. He was one of the members of St. Susan's, Lullworth, and afterwards of Melleray in France; and had the care of the brethren during their journey from France to Ireland, after their expulsion from the peaceful home of Melleray. He died, Prior of Mount St. Bernard, in 1850, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, thirty-first of his religious profession, and the twenty-eighth of his priestly character. Never will the writer of these lines forget the fervent manner in which he thanked God, a few moments before his death, for having called him to the holy state of religion, and for having given him the grace of perseverance to the last hour of his life.

The increase of the community, from the profession of several novices, and the addition of exiled members from the Abbey of Melleray, in France, rendered the present accommodation insufficient.

It was therefore necessary to enlarge the building, but, alas! for this object so desirable, and so urgently required, there were no funds. But God, who feeds the birds of the air, who clothes the lilies of the field, could not forget his poor servants, or let their humble trust in His all-bountiful providence remain unanswered and unrequited. About this time it happened that the Earl of Shrewsbury came to Grace Dieu Manor to pay a visit of a few days to his friend Mr. Ambrose Lisle Phillipps. A Sunday intervening, Mr. Lisle Phillipps conducted his noble friend to the monastery, to assist at the Vespers of the Monks. The Earl was profoundly edified and affected. The sound of that simple and solemn chant sung as of old in the blessed days of St. Bernard; the sight of the monks in their antique monastic habit; their truly mortified and religious aspect; their humble and devotional demeanour; all contributed to produce the most powerful emotions in the pious mind of the noble Earl. After Vespers he accompanied his friend round the monastic estate, the romantic character of which excited his admiration, and

when they reached the spot where the present abbey now stands, he exclaimed, "O my dear friend, why did you not persuade the monks to build here in this charming spot!" Mr. Ambrose Lisle Phillipps agreed with the Earl, and told him how anxious he had been that the monastery should be there; that he had even thought of a monastery in that spot many years before he had purchased the land of Mr. Gisborne, and before he had any definite idea of such a foundation; that immediately after the presentation of the land to the monks, the Father-Provincial of the English Jesuits, Father Norris, while on a visit at Grace Dieu Manor, had urged the building of the monastery on this spot, but that various circumstances, which appeared to the monks to indicate the Divine Will, had combined together to fix it where it was. After this the Earl of Shrewsbury and Mr. Ambrose Lisle Phillipps returned to Grace Dieu. What was the joy and surprise of the latter, when, in the course of the evening, the Earl, expressing how deeply his visit to the new foundation had edified him, signified his desire to participate in the good work by offering towards it no less a sum than two thousand pounds, but on this condition, that a new monastery should be commenced on the very spot which had excited his admiration. We need scarcely add that his friend, while expressing his warm thanks for such a noble offer, assured the Earl of his hearty approval of the condition, adding, however, that it must depend on the consent of the good Cistercian Fathers themselves, which he had no doubt of obtaining. The next day Mr. Lisle Phillipps informed the Prior of the benefaction he had received from his noble friend; the condition on which it was made was gladly acceded to, and every thing was arranged for a speedy visit to the site by the Earl's architect, Augustus Welby Pugin, Esq. Mr. Pugin arrived a few weeks after this, and having given a plan, which was arranged according to the usual form of a Cistercian Mon-

astery, the work was speedily commenced, Mr. Pugin charitably offering his services gratis.*

We will give Mr. Pugin's description of the present Abbey of Mount St. Bernard, as far superior to anything we ourselves could present to the reader.

"The prospect of the monastery," (speaking of the bird's-eye view which he gave of it in the Dublin Review for February 1842,) "which is taken from the south-west, represents the edifice as complete, and gives a general idea of the locality in which it is placed. The country immediately surrounding the monastery is exceedingly wild and romantic, more, indeed, resembling Sicilian than English scenery. Irregular masses of granite rocks of most picturesque outline surround the land cultivated by the monks; and as the situation is exceedingly elevated, the extensive prospects which open out beyond these from different points of view, are truly glorious to behold. The monastery is sheltered on the north side by a huge rock, on the summit of which it is proposed to erect a Calvary, which will be visible from an immense extent of the surrounding country.† Although, from its exposed position, the land is far from desirable in an agricultural

* Mr. Pugin, through his admiration of the beautiful architecture of the middle ages, was induced to inquire into the doctrine of the Catholic Church. After a careful and thorough examination of our tenets, he became a fervent and edifying convert to our holy faith. Few persons have studied ecclesiastical architecture with the same ardour of spirit, or with the same comprehension of mind. He can appreciate the beauty of each single detail, and then assemble and unite the various ornaments, proportions and materials into a grand and imposing edifice, with all the symmetry, elegance, and stability of a mediæval Church. Hence he stands unrivalled at the present day, for originality of design in his ecclesiastical edifices.

† About this rock there was considerable doubt, after the purchase of the land, whether it belonged to the monastic grounds, or to the parish. It was this doubt which prevented the choice of the ground beneath for the site of the first edifice. It became necessary to settle this question before the erection of the present

point of view, the unceasing toil of the religious has so far overcome natural difficulties, that a considerable portion of the ground is already brought into cultivation. The whole of the regular buildings, cloister, chapter-house, refectory, dormitory, calefactory, guest-house, prior's lodgings, lavatory, kitchen offices, &c., are now actually finished; and arrangements are in progress for completing, as soon as possible, a sufficient portion of the church, to enable the monks to celebrate the divine office with becoming solemnity: when this is achieved, the community will leave their present temporary edifice, and enter upon the occupation of this new monastery.

"The whole of the buildings are erected in the greatest severity of the lancet style, with massive walls and buttresses, long and narrow windows, high gables and roofs, with deeply arched doorways. Solemnity and simplicity are the characteristics of the monastery, and every portion of the architecture and fittings, corresponds to the austerity of the Order for whom it has been raised. The space enclosed by the cloisters is appointed for the cemetery; a stone cross, similar to those which were formerly

abbey. Terms of purchase were offered to the parish authorities, but rejected. Then an exchange was proposed,—but the votes of the said authorities were not unanimous. Father Bernard consulted the county constable, at his offices in Leicester; and this gentleman ascertained that the rock in question was included in the land purchased from Mr. Gisborne, and that the parish-rock was a short distance lower down, sufficiently beyond the reach, in which it might be made the scene of annoyance to the monastery. The parish authorities were loath to yield; they threatened opposition; they spoke of holding parties of pleasure upon the rock, and of overlooking the monks. But when they had invited the county constable to visit the locality, to finally arrange the matter,—and when he had given his decision against them, they refrained from any further molestation of the religious in the erection of their new monastery.

erected in every churchyard, will be set up in the centre, and the memorials of the departed brethren will be inserted on plain wooden crosses at the head of the graves. The view from this enclosure is particularly striking. From the nature of the material used, (a sort of rubble granite,) and the massiveness of the architecture, the building already possesses the appearance of antiquity; and this being combined with the stillness of the place and the presence of the religious, clad in the venerable habits of the Order, the mind is most forcibly carried back to the days of England's faith."

He next speaks of the plate which represents the interior of the conventual church, taken from the western end of the nave. "The arches are shewn as springing from pillars of nine feet in circumference, ornamented with foliated caps." (These however, are plain.) "The framing of the roof is open to the church, and springs from stone corbels, level with the base of the clerestory windows; the high altar is at the eastern end, against a reredos of arched panels, below the triple lights of the end gable; four massive pillars support the arches of the centre tower, which is shown in the external prospect. On the eastern walls of the transepts are two altars, that on the south dedicated in honour of our Blessed Ladye, and the northern one in honour of St. Joseph. As the chapter-house joins close to the southern wall of the transept, a rose window will be erected in the gable, and three large lancet lights on the opposite end; the sacristy is on the south side, and forms in the plan a continuation of the transept gable wall, nearly as far eastward as the termination of the church. The whole choir is surrounded by spacious aisles for solemn processions. The stalls of the religious extend down a considerable portion of the nave, as far as the large stone rood loft, which will be ascended by two stone staircases immediately behind the abbot's and prior's stalls. This rood loft is supported by

three open arches, the two side ones containing stone altars, surmounted by paintings and other enrichments. The custom of placing altars in the rood screens, which is exceedingly ancient, originated in the monastic churches; we are not aware of existing instances where they occur in any other. The reason is obvious: as the people were entirely excluded from the eastern portion of the church, and confined to that part of the nave, which remained between the rood loft and the western end, the monks naturally resorted to this expedient, for administering the consolation of the holy sacrifice, to such of the faithful, as might visit their churches through devotion.....The arrangement of the rood screen is, therefore, quite correct, for a monastic church; the depth of the arches under which the altars are placed, is considerable; and, with the staircases, this loft will occupy one bay of the nave in width; above the screen, the rood will be fixed with appropriate images, all richly painted and gilt. The upper extremity of the cross will be upwards of fifty feet in height from the level of the pavement, and the width across the arms, about twelve feet. By the rules of the Cistercian Order, the rood loft is used for all its ancient purposes, and will be provided with letterns, standards for lights, and other necessary furniture." [Dublin Review, Vol. xii. p. 121.]

In 1841, Father Bernard was appointed superior. The walls of the monastery were rising higher and higher every day, but there was no church, no, nor the foundations of one. Yet this was absolutely necessary before the new monastery could be inhabited by the brotherhood. The Earl of Shrewsbury had conferred all the assistance his circumstances at that period would permit. To raise the funds required a bazaar was strongly recommended. About three years previously to the erection of the new abbey, Ambrose Lisle Phillipps, Esq. wrote a circular to the Catholic ladies of England, who generously responded

to the appeal; and the result was a large collection of fancy works, which were disposed of in London and Liverpool for the completion of the chapel then in use at the former monastery. Now it was decided to hold a bazaar in Preston, in Lancashire, during the memorable period of the Guild, 1842, which did not realize anticipation. The following spring a bazaar was held in Manchester, and crowned with eminent success. The Cistercian brotherhood were thereby enabled to begin their new church. The nave of the abbey church, as described above by its distinguished architect, from the western end to the transepts, was accordingly commenced. The estimate for this portion, exclusive of fittings, was £1,180.

The first stone of this church was laid by Father Bernard, the Prior, on the 27th of June, 1843. The Catholic school children and the guilds from Loughborough were in attendance. A procession of these children and guilds, followed by the community in their monastic dress, marched from the old monastery across the meadows, singing psalms and litanies, to the site marked out for the new edifice. The Hon. and Rev. George Spencer preached an appropriate and instructive sermon to a great concourse of people. The summits of the rocks and chief eminences adjacent were crowned with spectators. The blessings of the Church, and the solemn prayers by which the protection of that Almighty Being for whose worship a temple was about to be erected, were performed with becoming solemnity, in presence of an attentive audience, congregated amidst wild and forest scenery.

The following are the dimensions of that portion of the church which is already erected:—

Length inside - - - -	84	feet.
Breadth of the aisles - -	10	,,
Breadth of the nave - - .	25	,,
Height of the gable - -	52	,,

Height of the walls - - -	34	feet
Height of the aisles - - -	16	„
Height of the pillars - -	12	„
Height of the arches - -	20	„
Distance between the pillars from centre to centre - -	11½	„

The transepts, with the spire, the chancel, the Lady Chapel and sacristy, have yet to be completed. A subscription is opened, and the donations of the charitable are thankfully received for this purpose.

In the year 1842 Mr. Potter, the author of the "History of Charnwood Forest," paid several visits to the monastery, whilst collecting materials for his highly interesting work. After giving a brief sketch of the Cistercian Institute, from the pen of "a talented Roman Catholic gentleman," he concludes in his own words: "It is right to say that Mount St. Bernard, whether as offering a fair picture of monastic life, or as embellishing scenery of singular wildness and beauty, or as presenting the somewhat unusual occurrence of a partial re-possession of a district in which, three centuries ago, there were four similar institutions, has of late been an object of great and increasing curiosity; strangers from all parts of the kingdom have visited it during the last and present summer; it has this year been honoured by a royal visit.* And, however differing in creed, it must be owned that few leave the spot without finding their prejudices somewhat softened by the bland and courteous welcome of the lowly Cistercians."

* So states "An Appeal to the Catholics of England," (p. 159.) The royal visit here alluded to was made by the Duchess of Saxe Weimar, sister to Queen Adelaide, accompanied by Lord Howe and several members of his family.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BLESSING OF THE NEW MONASTERY AND THE CHURCH. THE CLOISTERS OPEN TO ALL VISITORS. THE CISTERCIAN CHURCHES GENERALLY LARGE; REASONS. THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE ENCLOSURE. MONASTIC DUTIES PLEASANT. ADDITIONS TO THE MONASTERY. THE BLESSING OF THE CALVARY.

On the 20th of August, 1844, the new Monastery, and the portion of the church completed, were solemnly blessed, the one for the future habitation of the brotherhood, the other for the celebration of divine service.

It was the Festival of St. Bernard, the patron of the Monastery. A solemn procession from the old Monastery —which was now to be the Grange or Farm House— marched across the meadows chanting psalms and litanies to the new church. The choir and guilds from Whitwick kindly gave their services to enhance the interest of a ceremony so new and imposing amidst the wilds of the forest. Father Bernard, the Prior, attended by deacon and subdeacon, sung the high mass. After the Gospel, the Right Rev. Dr. Wiseman delivered a sermon replete with learning and eloquence, descriptive of the rise and progress of the regular orders in the early ages of the Church; their zeal and their sufferings, making the desert to smile, and the rose of holiness and truth to flourish in the wilderness, verifying the prediction of the Prophet Jeremiah.

In the afternoon, the Right Rev. Dr. Morris delighted his hearers with a sermon from the text, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." The discourse made a deep impression.

Many of the neighbouring clergy were present on the occasion, and were entertained with refreshment in the refectory of the Monastery. As the seal which excludes females from the enclosure of Cistercian Houses was not yet affixed, numerous parties of ladies and gentlemen, assembled from distant places to assist at the religious ceremonies of the day, were perambulating the cloisters and enjoying the liberty granted for the last time to the devout female sex, until the Church is consecrated; when the abbey gates will again be thrown open for the admission of all who may wish to see it, during the octave of the consecration.

On the following morning the voice of strangers had died away. The cloisters were still; the brotherhood were either pursuing their appointed avocations, or chanting, with their usual solemnity, the divine office. "Cardinal Bona, [De Divin. Psal. 451.] says, that the Cistercian Abbeys were celebrated for the grandeur of the divine music, which resounded in their churches night and day. The offices were celebrated in them with so much solemnity and devotion, that it seemed as if one heard there the voice of angels." [Mores Catholici, B. x. p. 182.]

All the Cistercian Churches were upon a large scale. Pontigny was 351 feet, with transepts 162 feet. Fountains, in Yorkshire, 358 feet, with transepts, 186 feet. Tintern, 228 feet, with transepts, 150 feet. Furness, 304 feet, Rievaulx, 222 feet, by 50 feet in width. Netley, 200 feet by 60 feet in width. One reason given by Mr. Pugin for these vast dimensions, is the total separation of seculars from the community. But no doubt another important reason would be the sublime effect which is given to music by the lofty nave and majestic proportions of an ecclesiastical edifice erected in the style of our early English architecture.

"A mighty burst!
A forest sounding music! every tone

Which the blasts call forth with their harping wings
From gulfs of tossing foliage there is blent:
And the old minster,—forest like itself—
With its long avenues of pillared shade,
Seems quivering all with spirit, as that strain
O'erflows its dim recesses, leaving not
One tomb unthrilled by the strong sympathy
Answering the electric notes."

Mrs. Hemans.

Nowhere, but in a large and magnificent church, would the poet Lamartine have been inspired with such thoughts as the following: "Now I love, O God, the obscurity of Thy temple; it is an island of peace in the ocean of the world, a beacon of immortality, inhabited alone by Thee and death. One hears from afar the flood of time which wars upon this border of eternity! The voice concentrated within these walls resounds better to the soul than when lost in air; and the holy echo of this sonorous vault bears along with it the fervent sigh which seeks Thee in its ascent to Heaven, without permitting it to evaporate!"

I have said the community were busy with their usual monastic duties the day after the solemn opening of the church. They were busy, but not sad; "for the variety of holy observances dispels weariness and apathy." [St. Bernardi, Epist. 78, i.]

"Variety," said Rasselas, "is so necessary to content, that even the happy valley disgusted me by the recurrence of its luxuries; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself with impatience, when I saw the monks of St. Antony support, without complaint, a life, not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship."

"Those men," answered Imlac, "are less wretched in their silent convent than the Abyssinian princes in their prison of pleasure. Whatever is done by the monks is incited by an adequate and reasonable motive. Their labour supplies them with necessaries; it therefore cannot

be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another state, and reminds them of its approach, while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly distributed; one duty succeeds another; so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful, because they consider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity." [Dr. Sam. Johnson's Rasselas, c. xlvii.]

But does not their silence make them exceedingly gloomy? No; for many entertain the same sentiments as Cardan the physician. "I feel that I am little fit for conversation. First, because I love solitude; for never am I more with those whom I love, than when I am alone. But I love God, the good Spirit. When I am alone, I contemplate the immense Good, the eternal Wisdom, the Author of light, the true Joy, the foundation of Truth, the Author of all things, who is happy in Himself, and the desire of all the happy. What other mind can I love? What intelligence more sincere, more lofty, more secure than the divine? Libraries are crammed with books; minds are spoiled by erudition; men transcribe, but write not. What, then, can I hope from the conversation of men—men garrulous, avaricious, deceitful and ambitious? But, you say, man is a social animal, and why renounce friends? I know that these things can be objected to me; but I am not ignorant that many things seem hard and absurd, which, when investigated, appear very different; and that, on the contrary, there are other things apparently gentle and useful, which, in reality are absurd and hard." [De vitâ propria, c. liii.]

"Truly," observes St. Bernard, no incompetent judge in this matter, "Truly you may behold in all congregations of monks, some that are filled with consolations, abounding in joy, always cheerful and agreeable, fervent

in spirit, meditating day and night on the law of God, frequently looking up to heaven and lifting up pure hands in prayer, careful observers of their conscience, and devout pursuers of good works ; to whom discipline is lovely, fasting sweet, vigils short, manual labour pleasant, and the whole austerity of their conversation refreshing.' [In Ascensione Dom. Serm. vi. 1. We have borrowed some of these quotations from the rich treasury of Mr. Digby's Mores Catholici.]

It was found necessary, for the greater seclusion of the brotherhood, to erect lodges or apartments for the reception of strangers, especially ladies, who might wish to visit the abbey church. A house, too, was wanted, for the service and relief of the poor. Designs were given by Mr. Pugin, and the work was immediately commenced The roof over the kitchen and calefactory was raised to the same height as the rest of the south front; and two large rooms were gained by this addition. The present infirmary, with an additional room for guests, has been erected in a style somewhat more ornamental than the earlier portions of the monastery, extending and improving very considerably the south front and the court-yard. The prior, Father Bernard, laboured indefatigably in the accomplishment of these important additions to the monastic edifice.

In 1847, the 20th of August, the feast of our illustrious patron, the new Calvary was solemnly blessed. A wooden cross fourteen feet high, bearing an image of our crucified Redeemer, and morticed into a stone pedestal, resting upon a platform of three stone steps, had been planted upon the very summit of the cone-shaped, but jagged rock—mentioned by Mr. Pugin—peering from behind the church, commanding a view over an immense range of country, and encircling within its horizon Belvoir Castle, Nottingham, and the hills far off to the north, Derby, and the celebrated Peak, portions of Staffordshire and Warwick-

shire, and the greater part of Leicestershire. How truly does this elevation assist our conception of that infinite love of our dear Saviour, who said, "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to myself; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world;"—the world, which, from this lofty Calvary, seems spread out beneath him. Few spots in England afford so eligible a site for the tragic representation of our Redeemer's death.

A numerous congregation assembled on the occasion from the neighbourhood. They sat down in groups beneath the rock, whilst the Rev. Moses Furlong preached, from a set-off in the rock, about half way from its summit, and which accommodated him with a green sward, and a commanding position, an appropriate and very impressive sermon, which touched the chords of many hearts, and produced the delicious feelings—the sweet tears of compunction and sorrow for sin. The ceremony will be long remembered by those who had the happiness to witness it.

CHAPTER XX.

BRIEFS FROM ROME. MOUNT ST. BERNARD ERECTED INTO AN ABBEY. FATHER BERNARD CHOSEN AND CONFIRMED ABBOT. SOME NOTICE OF HIS LIFE. HIS CONSECRATION. CONCLUSION.

In the year 1848, through the mediation of the venerable Bishop Walsh, who had taken a lively interest in the monastery from its commencement, certain briefs were received from Rome. The first one raises the house of Mount St. Bernard into an abbey, with independent jurisdiction; so that it will be the mother house of all Cistercian monasteries that may hereafter be erected in England.

"Having considered the representation of the undersigned pro-secretary relative to the Cistercian monks of the Strict Observance, in the Central District of England; having duly pondered the petition of the said monks, who desire that their monastery may be honoured with the title of an Abbey; influenced moreover by the favourable testimony of the Right Rev. Dr. Thomas Walsh, Vicar-apostolic of the said district, the Sacred Congregation De Propagandâ Fide has consented to the petition," &c. This decree was ratified by his Holiness Pius IX., the ninth of May, 1848.

The second brief united the abbey of Mount St. Bernard to the General Chapter of the Cistercian Congregation of Strict Observance in France.

The third brief confirmed the election, which had been made by the unanimous votes of the community, of Father Bernard to be the first abbot of the new abbey, and the first mitred abbot in England since the lamentable period

of the Reformation. [The briefs are given in the Appendices, letter N.]

Father Bernard, as we have already noticed, began his novitiate in the 26th year of his age, 1808, at St. Susan's Monastery, Lullworth.* On the Feast of the Presentation, 1810, he made his solemn profession. He afterwards discharged several trustworthy offices, both at St. Susan's and at Melleray in France. He had the charge of the bell, and of calling the brethren to matins in the morning—an office which in St. Benedict's rule is either given to the abbot himself, or to one in whom he can have perfect confidence—for more than twenty years. It was a duty which demanded unremitting diligence and regularity. He was several years father, master of the choir novices, and of the convent brothers. Many years he was president of the daily work. He was, likewise, appointed guardian of the rule; that is, to draw out every month a list of the infringements of the rule which had fallen under his observation, and to present it to the abbot, that he might apply the timely hand of correction to every abuse, and irregularity. He was likewise sub-prior during a short period. He never ascended higher in the ecclesiastical state, during his residence in France, than minor orders, which enabled him to discharge more efficiently the office of sacristan, which he held for some time.

Trained by this long experience, and with the practical knowledge of every department in the monastic life, his assistance, in the establishment of the new colony on Charnwood, had been eagerly sought from the day of its commencement. After the expulsion of the community from Melleray, (1831), Father Bernard remained in Nantes, daily expecting permission to return to his be-

* About two years previously to his noviceship he had been converted to the Catholic faith, chiefly by reading that excellent prayer book, the Garden of the Soul. He was received into the Church by the Rev. Mr. Brookes.

loved monastery. But this permission was invariably withheld, until years had flown away. During the period he was in Nantes, he resided, by the appointment of his superior, in an ancient convent, not inhabited by any community, but by a pious lady, who had been bereaved both of her husband and only daughter, a young lady about nineteen years of age. Her friends removed her from her own residence, lest excessive grief might affect the mind; and fitted up comfortable apartments in this vacant convent, and obtained permission for Father Bernard to be the guardian of her establishment. Here he was enabled to practise all his monastic duties. He rose at two o'clock in the morning, recited office, and spent the time appointed by the Rule in church, heard mass daily, and lived on abstinence diet.

In 1836, Father Odilo, A. Lisle Phillips, Esq., and Bishop Walsh, wrote pressing entreaties to obtain his services for Mount St. Bernard. Father Antony wished his return to Melleray, which might then have been accomplished by the removal of the prohibition on the part of the local authorities. Still the superior would not forbid the acceptance of the invitation to England. He declined any authoritative decision upon the subject. In this perplexity Father Bernard had recourse to his warm and respected friend, the holy Bishop Flaget, Bishop of Bardstown, in America, and who, at that time, was at Nantes. He placed the whole matter before the good bishop, stated his own dispositions and the chief events of his life, and received in answer, a recommendation to join his brethren in England.

It was March 1837, that he made one of the inmates of the lowly cottage of Charnwood Forest. In 1838, he was ordained priest; in 1841, appointed prior; in 1848, confirmed abbot-elect; and on the 18th of February, 1849, solemnly consecrated, in the 66th year of his age, and 39th of his religious profession.

This ceremony was to have taken place on Friday the 16th ; but it was found, after invitations had been issued, that the day was not included within the appointed rubrics. Notwithstanding the disappointment, several friends, on Saturday the 17th, had arrived and were in attendance, when the Right Rev. Dr. Ullathorne appeared in his pontifical robes at the western entrance of the church. This was his first visit to the monastery ; and consequently the community received him in ceremony, according to the regulations of the Cistercian Ritual.

The following is a description given of his reception, by a stranger, in the "Weekly and Monthly Orthodox," for February 24th, 1849, with a few corrections and additions. "The distinguished bishop, with his mitre and crozier, the shepherd of the sheep of Christ, and the humble brethren, headed by their abbot, who, with gentle voice, with manner full of feeling, 'and head that stoops because the heart is meek,' bade, in simple words, his Lordship welcome, and told him how God had blessed them, and brought them from small beginnings to their present advancement. The bishop then entered, and having been led in procession round the cloisters, he was conducted to the chapter-house, where he made an extemporaneous address to the assembled brotherhood. He spoke in a fatherly and affectionate manner sentiments of the happiness which he experienced, in finding himself in the midst of a community of Cistercian Monks, whose Institute had always claimed his veneration and attachment, and which would once have been the object of his choice, had not his superiors given a prohibitory decision. The feeling of confidence and cheerfulness which his consoling words produced in every heart present, will be long remembered. He was then conducted to the choir of the church, where the Te Deum was chanted, and the episcopal benediction given."

The following notice of the ceremony of the Sunday

is taken from the Tablet, and the above-mentioned article :—

"Punctually at ten o'clock, A.M., on Sunday morning, the abbey bell tolled for the solemn service in the church; and, ere it ceased, both ministers and people had entered, and fallen into their respective places. The Right Rev. Dr. Ullathorne was the officiating bishop, attended by his deacons and sub-deacons, and assistant presbyter, Dr. Weedall. Dr. Wareing was present, 'in pontificalibus,' with his chaplain. The three assistant abbots were Father Maxime, Abbot of Melleray, who had been a novice under the Abbot elect, Father Augustine, Abbot of Bellefontaine, and Father Bruno, Abbot of Mount Melleray, in Ireland. The ceremony was performed according to the Roman Pontifical.

"The abbatial vestments were blessed and placed upon the Abbot elect. The most essential ceremony was the imposition of hands, by which the abbatial dignity is conferred. As soon as the form of prayer was ended, the bishop, as though his soul were on fire with holy zeal, and in exulting joy, rose from his seat, and, with arms raised as in benediction, exclaimed in loud accents, 'Praise the Lord, all ye nations, praise Him all ye people!' Then, addressing the attendant ministers seated around his throne, he added, 'Praise Him, ye stoled priests, for the mercy of the Lord is confirmed upon us.' He then dwelt on the history of the order, its former fame, and the sad eclipse which, during the last three hundred years, it has suffered in England. But now, by the mercy of God, a brighter time was come; the monks have found in this country a patron not inferior to that Odo of Burgundy, who loved their order at its birth. A vigorous and flourishing colony has sprung up in the wild forest, not far from their old home at Garendon. His Lordship beautifully traced the leading features of the Cistercian's daily duties, and the object of his angelic vocation. He portrayed in feeling

language the Christian duties that were so sublimely fulfilled in three particular offices of the order; namely, manual labour, earning their bread by the sweat of their brow in the spirit of penance, hospitality, and the chanting of the divine praises day and night. He concluded by invoking a blessing on the Right Rev. Father Abbot, who had been destined by God to be the first mitred abbot in England since the Reformation; and he prayed over him that he might be endued with the spiritual gifts and graces of the four great lights of the Cistercian Order; the discernment and knowledge of monastic discipline of Alberic, the firmness of Robert, the multiplicity of works for the glory of God and our holy religion of Stephen, and the piety and devotion to our Divine Master of Bernard. Such was the tone of the bishop's beautiful and appropriate discourse.

"The new abbot received from the bishop the mitre, the crozier, the ring, and the gloves, each duly blessed. He was afterwards led by the hand of the bishop to his abbatial stall. There, the bishop, having delivered to the consecrated abbot his crozier, turned round to the altar and intoned the Te Deum, which was immediately taken up by the choir, and all present in the church. Then the abbot received the homage of his brethren, and gave to all of them the paternal kiss of peace. Afterwards, he gave from the altar his solemn benediction; and the ceremonies of the morning were concluded. The secular part of the church and the tribune of the guests were thronged; for many had come from a distance to witness so interesting a ceremony.

"Afterwards, there was a repast given by the Father Abbot to his friends and guests, in the large room of the lodges.

"Such is a brief account of an event, the announcement of which must go home to the heart of every Catholic. God hath not forgotten His people who serve Him. The

age of ignorance, and therefore of persecution and prejudice, is passing away; a time of inquiry, and consequently of conviction and truth, has, we trust, already commenced. The church in England marches steadily on, as a conqueror should do. Her temples are open in the great towns, and her priests are showing forth there the virtues of the active life; her convents are rising on the hills and in the valleys, and there her recluses live a life of prayer and self-denial, and dwell in contemplation on the very threshold of heaven. Let those who are weary with toiling up and down the highways of this world, rejoice at such a home of the soul as Mount St. Bernard; where, cradled among rocks which rise like a barrier against 'the fever and the stir unprofitable' of ordinary life, stands the peaceful habitation of those mortified men, whose only ambition it is to crowd into their span of existence as much devotion of heart and austerity of body, as God and nature will allow. If, haply, they may obtain from heaven by their prayers and service of obedience, those favours for themselves and for the world, which the unreflecting sometimes think are accorded only to the more apparent, but not more effectual labours of a life of action." (A.)

We have now seen the house of Mount St. Bernard raised to the dignity of a Cistercian abbey, and Father Bernard duly confirmed and consecrated the first abbot. We now offer a few parting words before we thank the reader for his kind and patient attention.

When he beholds the lovely scenery, in the midst of which the ruins of Cistercian Houses are generally situated, the glen of Furness shut in from every wind by beautiful hills, and lodged as it were in the very bosom of silence; the glorious and inspiring landscape of Tintern; the enchanting locality of Netley; the ever-verdant and delightful scenes of Buildwas, on the winding Severn's bank, let him remember, that these Edens of England were once the marshy forest, the bleak moorland, or the

barren down, the Charnwood Forest of their day; and whilst these thoughts dwell lively in his recollection, let his heart pay a tribute of gratitude to those men, who, by patient toil, and sound intellect, and generous outlay, could make roses blossom in the wilderness, and convert dreary wastes and dark untrodden wilds of forest lands, into "gardens of pleasure." A visit to Mount St. Bernard, will furnish an instance of a transformation of this nature, now in operation.

If religious communities in after ages, when they had borne the heat and burden of the day, became rich, it was chiefly by the fruit of their own industry. Their first struggles with poverty, privation and hardship, deserved the reward of pleasant fields, and noble cloisters. Citeaux could not furnish for the first colonists, one meal per day, for each religious, even of vegetables and coarse bread. "A colony of twelve Cistercian monks and a superior, from Waverly Abbey, arrived at Brightley, on the 3rd of May, 1136. Scarcely had they taken possession of this new establishment, when their founder and benefactor was snatched away by death, on the 25th of June, 1137. The Convent was situated in a desert and barren spot; the community was destitute and friendless; and with mature deliberation, they unanimously agreed to abandon Brightley, after a five years' residence, and to return to Waverly." [Monasticon Diocesis Exoniensis, by G. Oliver, D. D. p. 338, Ford Abbey.]

Well, the monks became wealthy; but wealth did not make them avaricious, did not make them misers. If they abounded in opulence, they knew how to make a noble use of it; they knew how to employ it in the amelioration of human misery. And whilst they were improving by daily labour their own broad lands, they were conferring additional value on the property of their neighbours. They were constructing roads across hitherto

impassable regions; they were gathering around the new built village church, a hardy race of peasantry, who were able and willing to break up the stubborn soil, and make it obedient to the operations of the plough. Sir Richard Keane sold his moorlands to great advantage, immediately after the Cistercian monks had fixed their residence in Mount Melleray, near Cappoquin, Ireland. In 1850, the land of Charnwood forest, contiguous to Mount St. Bernard, was sold for 12*l.* 16*l.* 18*l.* and 20*l.* per acre.

We wish to make one observation more. The Cistercian Order, during the lapse of ages, has had the benefit of many reformations. Some have not reached the standard of the primitive usages; others have pushed austerity beyond the wise regulations of our forefathers. Yet now in the 19th century, 754 years from its institution, it is flourishing in the country which gave it birth, and is reviving even in England, after 300 years of strict banishment, in all its pristine discipline.—Yea, it is sending out colonies to those quarters of the globe, which, in days of greater glory and renown, it had never known. This living fact almost persuades one to believe the ancient Annalists of the Order, when they state, that the Blessed Mary, Queen of Heaven, the Advocate and Patroness of the Cistercian Institute, will never suffer it to sink into oblivion; but will always preserve it in existence by her powerful intercession.

It is, however, in existence; and has new blood infused into its veins; and displays much vigour of constitution; and gives no unequivocal signs of longevity. May its members, by their fidelity to their holy rule, deserve the praises bestowed by St. Richard, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the 13th century, on our forefathers. Writing to the Cistercian Order, in the reign of Henry II. he says: "Among all the Orders with which the Spouse of Christ is adorned, there is none more fragrant in virtue,

none sweeter in Christ, with the odour of a holy reputation than yours.....O desirable tabernacles, O venerable congregation, O Citeaux, how great is thy house, how fruitful in children, how magnificent in tongues, how glorious in people!" [See an account of the impostor Jeffries, in the Appendices, letter O.]

Appendix.

A

THE reader will find a beautiful chapter on "Religious Institutions in the History of the West," in Balmez, the illustrious Spanish philosopher of the nineteenth century: "Protestantism and Catholicity compared in their effects on the Civilisation of Europe," chap. xli. We will give the following extract.

"We observe that the religious establishments among us added to the Gospel spirit the principle of their foundation a new character, that of conservative, restorative, and regenerative associations. The monks of the west were not content with sanctifying themselves; from the first they influenced society. The light and life which their holy abodes contained, laboured to enlighted and fertilise the chaos of the world. I do not know in history a nobler or more consoling spectacle than that which is presented to us by the foundation, existence, and development of the religious institutions of Europe. Society had need of strong efforts to preserve its life amid the terrible crisis through which it had to pass. The secret of strength is in the union of individual forces, in association; and it is remarkable that this secret has been taught to European society as if by a revelation from heaven. Everything shakes, falls to pieces, and perishes. Religion, morality, public authority, laws, manners, sciences, and arts,—everything has sustained immense losses, everything goes to ruin; and judging of the future state of the world according to human probabilities, the evils are so great and numerous, that a remedy appears impossible. The

observer who, fixing his eyes upon those desolate times, finds there St. Bennet giving life to, and animating the religious institutions, organising them, giving them his wise rule and stability, imagines that he sees an angel of light issuing from the bosom of darkness. Than the extraordinary and sublime inspiration which guided this man nothing can be imagined better calculated to restore to dissolved society a principle of life capable of reorganizing it. Who does not know what, at that time, was the condition of Italy; I should rather say of the whole of Europe? What ignorance, what corruption, what elements of social dissolution! What desolation everywhere! And it is amid this deplorable state of things that the holy solitary appears, (the child of an illustrious family of Norcia,) resolved to combat the evil which threatens to invade the world.

"His arms are his virtues; the eloquence of his example gives him an irresistible ascendancy. Elevated above the whole of his age, burning with zeal, and yet full of prudence and discretion, he founds that institution which is to remain amid the revolution of ages, like the pyramids unmoved by the storms of the desert.

"What idea has there been more grand, more beneficent, more full of foresight and wisdom? At a time when knowledge and virtue had no longer an asylum; when ignorance, corruption, and barbarism, rapidly extended their conquests, to raise a refuge for misfortune, to form a sacred deposit for the precious monuments of antiquity and to open schools of knowledge and virtue where men —destined one day to figure in the vortex of the world— might come for instruction. Was not this a grand idea? When the reflecting man fixes his attention on the silent abode of Monte Cassino, where the sons of the most illustrious families of the empire are seen to come from all parts to that monastery; some with the intention of remaining there for ever, others to receive a good education,

and soon to carry back to the world a recollection of the serious inspirations which the holy founder had received at Subiaco ; when the monasteries of the order are seen to multiply everywhere, to be established as great centres of activity in all places, in the plains, in the forests, in the most uninhabited countries; he cannot help bending, with profound veneration, before the extraordinary man who had conceived such grand designs. If we are unwilling to acknowledge in St. Bennet a man inspired by Heaven, at least we ought to consider him as one of those geniuses who, from time to time, appear on earth to become the tutelary angels of the human race.

"Not to acknowledge the powerful effect of such institutions would be to show but little intelligence. When society is dissolved, it requires not words, not projects, not laws, but strong institutions to resist the shocks of the passions, the inconstancy of the human mind, and the destructive power of events; institutions which raise the mind, pacify and ennoble the heart, and establish in society a deep movement of reaction and resistance to the fatal elements which lead it to destruction. If there exists, then, an active mind, a generous heart, a soul animated by a feeling of virtue, they will all hasten to seek a refuge in the sacred asylums; it is not always granted to them to change the course of the world; but, at least, as men of solitude and sacrifice, they labour to instruct and calm their own minds, and they shed a tear of compassion over the senseless generations who are agitated by great disasters. From time to time they succeed in making their voices heard amid the tumult, to alarm the hearts of the wicked by accents which resemble the formidable warnings of heaven. Thus, they diminish the force of the evil while it is impossible to prevent it entirely. By constantly protesting against iniquity, they prevent its acquiring prescriptive right. In attesting to future generations by a solemn testimony, that there were always, amid the dark-

ness and corruption, men who made efforts to enlighten the world, and to restrain the torrent of vice and crime, they preserve faith in truth and virtue, and they reanimate the hopes of those who are afterwards placed in similar circumstances. Such was the action of the monks in the calamitous times of which we speak; such was their noble and sublime mission to promote the interests of humanity.

"Perhaps it will be said that the immense properties acquired by the monasteries, were an abundant recompense for their labours, and perhaps also a proof that their exertions were little disinterested.

"No doubt, if we look at things in the light in which certain writers have represented them, the wealth of the monks will appear as the fruit of unbounded cupidity, of cruelty, and perfidious policy; but we have the whole of history to refute the calumnies of the enemies of religion; and impartial philosophy, while acknowledging that all that is human is liable to abuse, takes care to assume a higher position, to regard things *en masse*, and to consider them in the vast picture where so many centuries have painted their features. It therefore despises the evil, which is only the exception, while it contemplates and admires the good, which is the rule.

"Besides the numerous religious motives which brought property into the hands of the monks, there is another very legitimate one, which has always been regarded as one of the justest titles of acquisition. The monks cultivated waste lands, dried up marshes, constructed roads, restrained rivers within their beds, and built bridges over them; that is to say, in countries which had undergone another kind of general deluge, they renewed in some measure what the first nations had done, to restore the revolutionized globe to its original form.

"A considerable portion of Europe had never received cultivation from the hands of men; the forests, the rivers,

the lakes, the thorny thicket, were as rough as they had been left by the hand of nature. The monasteries which were founded here and there, may be regarded as the centres of action, which the civilized nations established in the new countries, the faces of which they proposed to change by their powerful colonies. Did there ever exist a more legitimate title for the possession of large properties? Is not he who reclaims a waste country, cultivates it, and fills it with inhabitants, worthy of preserving large possessions there? Is not this the natural course of things? Who knows not how many cities and towns arose and flourished, under the shadows of the abbeys?"

In the "History of St. Alban's Abbey," by the Rev. Peter Newcome, Rector of Shenley, Herts, we read in the Preface, p. viii.: "Their utility (the abbeys in England) appeared in these respects, that they exercised great hospitality towards the poor, and this was done at one-tenth of the expense which the poor now create, by being maintained by a legal provision: the monasteries were in general the houses of reception for all the sick, and they were here nursed and cured: they generally employed masters to teach the poor children of the neighbourhood: they entertained all persons who were ingenious in any art or science, and often transcribed books, when but a few understood the art, or could undertake it.....These houses also kept public registers of all great transactions; to them we are indebted for all our English historians, down to the time of the dissolution.....Whatever were their temporal possessions, they were always found to be good landlords, ever ready at improvements, and doing many great works in inclosing, or draining, or planting, which individuals could not undertake. In truth, they did more to civilize mankind, and to bring them within the comforts of society, than any set of men of any denomination ever have done. And yet the ungrateful world,

that was enjoying the fruit of their labours and their riches, now beholding the edifice to be completed, cast down the builders and the scaffold, as if no longer useful.

"In spite of all the calumny that was thrown out against them, nothing so well proclaims their utility as this; that they maintained themselves in repute, some of them one thousand years, and many for the space of five, four, and three hundred years; and that when they were dissolved, Edward VI. and his counsellors found it necessary to endow new hospitals, build new schools, and provide new relief for the poor and helpless." This Protestant clergyman published his History in 1795.

"The world," says a writer in the Quarterly Review for the month of December, 1811, "has never been so deeply indebted to any other body of men as to this illustrious order (Benedictine monks); but historians, when relating the evil of which they were the occasion, have too frequently forgotten the good which they produced. Even the commonest readers are familiar with that arch-miracle-monger St. Dunstan; while the most learned of our countrymen scarcely remember the names of those admirable men who went from England, and became the apostles of the north. Tinian and Juan Fernandez are not more beautiful spots on the ocean, than Malmsbury, and Lindisfarne, and Jarrow in the ages of our heptarchy: a community of pious men, devoted to literature and the useful arts as well as to religion, seems, in those ages, like a green oasis amid the desert; like stars in a moonless night, they shine upon us with a tranquil ray."

See likewise Camden's Britannia, pp. 666; Grose's Antiq. prep; p. f. 61, 62; Tanner's Account of all the Abbeys, Priories, and Friaries formerly existing in England and Wales, pref. xxxi.; Drake's Literary Hours, vol. ii., p. 435; Mallett's History of the Swiss, vol. i., p. 105; and Marsham's Pref. to Dug. Mon.

In a pamphlet entitled "The Revival of the Monastic

Institutions, and their Bearing upon Society considered with reference to the present condition of the Anglican Church, by the Rev. F. Diedrich Wackerbarth, A. B., of Queen's Col. Camb., and Curate of Peldon, Essex, 1839," we read: "From his earliest childhood he (the author) has been led to believe that monastic institutions, so far from being a useless burden on society, have really, and ever must have where they exist, a very beneficial effect upon the moral, religious, and intellectual character of the people. He knows that their aspect towards learning was highly favourable, and that, were their existence again permitted, it would be again so: and probably few will be found to deny that the efforts of such institutions, in relieving the poor and destitute, have been, and would be, more successful; and would tend more to attach that portion of the community to their more favoured brethren, than any poor-law, however well framed and administered, and how much therefore more than the present heartless, barbarous, and fiendish enactment."—Preface.

"In considering the monastic institutions of former ages, it has been the custom of our time to look upon the abbeys of our forefathers, as indeed monuments of a high and holy state of feeling in their founders, but as practically the time of fanatic wildness, of drivelling folly, and of second childhood, and even of profligacy and vice; and he whose inclinations have led him to withdraw from the business and vexations of the world, to enjoy the devout serenity of the cloister, has been regarded with the sneer of contemptuous pity by the self-complacency of the present age, and summarily reckoned among the 'narrow-minded bigots of the dark ages,' forsooth. But the cry of truth cannot be altogether silenced, either by the sneers of the nineteenth, or by the clamours of the sixteenth century; and even in our own time the voice of at least one

great and good man* has been raised in opposition to the cuckoo cry of popular feeling."

"I am perfectly aware that there are many who will meet this reasoning with a few dozen obscene or ludicrous stories raked out of Fox, Speed, and others of the like sort, and then triumphantly ask, what would be the use of filling the country with lazy, immoral, and ignorant monks? But the fact is, that the monks were neither lazy, immoral, nor ignorant; and the whole history of literature triumphantly gives the lie to those brazen calumniators of their betters, who are usually cited for tales against the monks. Fox has lately been exposed in an admirable series of letters, by the able hand of Mr. Maitland, in the British Magazine; and it is to be hoped that some others of the same class will, before long, meet with a similar exposure. The spirit of study is reviving, and the day cannot therefore be far distant when the works of these atrocious forgers, falsifiers, slanderers, and liars, will be condemned to the oblivion they deserve. It is not in the roguishly garbled stories of Fox and the centuriators, that the history of Monachism is to be studied, but from the immortal works of Mabillon, of D'Archery, of Ruinart, of the Bollandists, of our own Sir William Dugdale, of the chroniclers of the middle ages, and from their own scholastic labours, that our ideas of the monks should be formed."—[Chap. I. and V.] The author, when he wrote this pamphlet, was a strenuous opponent of the Catholic Church. A few years afterwards he became a convert to the Catholic Faith.

* Sharon Turner, "whose words are authority,"—Anglo Saxons, tom. iii., p. 491, edit. 1828.

B.

"As they (the abbeys) had ever been the main pillar and support of the Papal power, it was natural and consistent to abolish the members, after the head was rejected. They were bodies so nearly allied to the Popedom, that they must fall with it: and though a gradual reformation might have been effected in them, yet, in the new plan of church government, they were deemed unnecessary; and the new head of the church and his counsellors wished to have as few subjects in the Church to be governed as might be: accordingly, by dissolving the regular clergy, and limiting the Church to the episcopal order of seculars, they rejected above 100,000 of the former, and retained about 8,000 of the latter."—Mr. Newcome, Rector of Shenley, Herts., Hist. of St. Alban's Abbey, Pref. p. xi.

C.

"These religious foundations fell with such undeserved calumny and slander, that it is but common justice to restore their character, and give them their due praises, wherever the same can be done; and I trust, if all others were as free from corruption and ill government as this of St. Alban's, it will be seen how unjustly they were accused, and their overthrow will appear to have been effected for other reasons than pretended misrule and secret corruption.....Whatever was the pretext, the real truth was, that their temporal power and wealth tempted their downfal; and, in spite of all the good and

real merit that was to be found in them, they fell a prey and spoil to an extravagant monarch and his necessitous courtiers." (Ibidem.)

"The visitors had doubtless received a full lesson at their departure, and were ordered to intimidate and terrify, with all possible threats of rigour, and hints of the danger which the monks were in from the premunire..... The report of the visitors was completed and published by the month of January, 1535—6; and was supposed to contain all the worst relations that could be gathered, and that done in haste; for the visitors finished their work in ten weeks. The full report never lived long; and Burnet saw only an abstract, containing an account of one hundred and forty-four houses, which, for their abominations and superstitions, he dwells on, with his wonted credulity and great predilection for scandal."

"In this return, of which the original (or an authentic copy from it) may be seen in the British Museum, the general character of the house is set down in a very short and concise manner, without any notice of their general deportment and outward behaviour: thus, if any relics were found in the chapel, the monks were set down as *superstitiosi*, &c. &c. Thus all persons were equally involved in one and the same charge; and that charge was not only never proved, but the guilt of it could never be known with certainty, and only guessed by the visitors." —[Ibid. ch. ix. p. 433.]

"The report made by the visitors on their second visitation hath not reached these times. But though they pretended to have discovered many enormities, not only in the morals, but in the economy and rule, of the houses; yet it was said at the time, and uncontradicted, that the commissioners had committed great violence and injustice, and that they had robbed and carried off all the plate and precious stones found in some houses, had committed great outrages in others, and that Dr. London had violated the

nuns at Godstow, and quite disgraced his reforming character." [Ibid. p. 440.]

"Of Dr. London it is affirmed in the Monasticon, vol. ii. p. 538, that he was afterwards convicted of perjury, and forced by a sentence to pass through Windsor and Ockingham, with his face to the horse's tail; and a paper on his head to certify his crime. This Dr. John London was, at the dissolution, dean of Wallingford, then made canon of Windsor, and warden of New College; and when the king established a bishop's see at Osney, he was made the first dean; but having employed himself at Windsor in swearing against some innocent persons charged with high treason, he was convicted of perjury, and sentenced as above. Monasticon, vol. ii. p. 104." [Ibid, p. 446.]

"Here closes the scene; and here we may behold fallen and set for ever the glory and splendour of this (St. Albans') and all other of these religious corporations, which, with most pious intentions in the founders, with general good conduct in the rulers, with most grateful acceptance in the sober and virtuous of all ranks, had provided for the wants and necessities of men; and the revenues which had cheered the hearts of the naked and hungry, now turned out of the channel of hospitality and beneficence, to be dissipated and wasted in the voluptuous pleasures and base gratifications, of the court and its followers." [Ibidem, p. 448.]

"The most abominable crimes were to be charged upon the religious," says Mr. Hearne, "and the charge was to be managed with the utmost industry, boldness, and dexterity. This was a powerful argument to draw an odium upon them, and to make them disrespected and ridiculed by the generality of mankind. And yet, after all, the proofs were so insufficient, that from what I have been able to gather, I have not found any direct one against even a single monastery." [Preliminary observations on B. Willis's view of Mitred Abbeys.]

"It is not with much credulity I listen to any, when they speak ill of those whom they are going to plunder. I rather suspect that vices are feigned, or exaggerated, when profit is looked for in their punishment. An enemy is a bad witness, a robber is a worse." [Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution, p. 207, 6th edit. See chapter xvi. of the present work, Article, Grace Dieu, for an illustration of these observations.]

D.

"Father Reyner in the appendix to his Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia, gives us a catalogue of the several abbots and priors, who took out letters of protection from King Edward I., when Pope Boniface VIII. prohibited the clergy from paying taxes to temporal princes, without consent of the Holy See. This happened in or just after the year 1296. By this catalogue, we find, that there were then in this kingdom forty Benedictine, sixty-one Cistercian, twenty-two Austin, and twenty-two Premonstratensian Abbots; in all one hundred and forty-five." In the time of Henry VIII. a period of two hundred years later, there were one hundred and one Cistercian Houses,—seventy-five monasteries, and twenty-six convents,—thirty-six of the superior monasteries in the kingdom were Cistercian.

E.

We have the following instance of hospitality in the eminent Cistercian Abbey of Furness, in Lancashire:—

"At the period of the dissolution, the abbey was endowed with a revenue of £805. 16s. 5d., exclusive of the woods, meadows, pastures, and fisheries, retained by the monks in their own hands; and of the shares of mines, mills, and salt works which belonged to the abbey. This wealth enabled the inhabitants of the monastery to exercise a princely hospitality, of which some remarkable instances have been preserved in the depositions taken in 1582, in the course of a dispute between the tenants of Low Furness, late holden under the abbot and convent, and John Brograve, Esq., attorney general of the duchy. One deponent, aged seventy-eight, said that he had many times seen the tenants resort to the monastery, on tunning days, sometimes with twenty, sometimes with thirty horses, and had delivered into every of them firkins or barrels of beer or ale, each containing ten or twelve gallons: and the same was worth ten pence or twelve pence, a barrel at that time. A dozen loaves of bread were delivered to every one that had a barrel of beer or ale, which bread and beer, or ale, was delivered weekly; and every dozen loaves was worth six-pence. Another deponent had known divers children of the tenants and their servants, to have come from the plough or other work into the said abbey, where they had dinner or supper; and the children of the said tenants came divers times to the said abbey; and were suffered to come to school and learning within the said monastery. This was confirmed by John Richardson, who said, that there were both a grammar school and a song school in the monastery, to which the children of the tenants that paid provisions, were free to come and resort; and that he was at the said school: and Richard Banks deposed that the tenants, their families and children, did weekly have and receive, at and out of the said monastery, of charity and devotion, over and besides the relief and commodities afore rehearsed, to the value of forty shillings

sterling." [History of the County Palatine and Duchy of Lancaster, by Edward Baines, Esq., M. P. &c.]

Richard Whiting, Abbot of Glastonbury, ruled over his monastery during fifteen years with admirable conduct. "He kept one hundred monks, maintained three hundred domestics and dependants, in many inferior offices, connected and subordinate to the abbey, and among them many sons and relations of gentlemen. He also distributed certain fixed alms, two days in the week, to the poor of the parishes adjoining. He received and treated all travellers; and sometimes took in and entertained five hundred horsemen at once. Yet he was now at last charged with embezzling some of the abbey's jewels and precious stones; and other crimes were accumulated to make it treason. And this farce of law, and mockery of all justice, was carried to this extremity—(he was drawn, hanged, and quartered with two of his monks)—against a man eighty years of age." [Mr. Newcome, Rector of Shenley, Herts. Hist. of St. Alban's, p. 445.]

"Well, time has swept away worse things than the spirit of Catholic love and reverence for the poor, which is ill exchanged for the cold and selfish policy that prevails too much in our own age." [Old England, vol. i. p. 299.]

F.

"Had Henry VIII. been a man susceptible of prudent counsels, and wishing to see his people happy, easy, and prosperous, he would have preserved these institutions (the monasteries), as being works of more public utility than any other; and which (together with the colleges founded for teaching those sciences wherein abbeys were defective) were most conducive to public benefit; and the crimes and

irregularities charged on them, if they had been even all proved, might have been corrected, and the ancient discipline restored, had they been placed under the inspection of the bishops, and made subject to their visitation. Wherever the rule was strictly observed, they lived within their income, and expended the remainder in a number of beneficial works, which conducted to a common advantage. And they never could have supported a character for so many ages for civil advantages, had they not been considered by all former kings and ministers as public agents in their hands for public uses, and as capable of serving their king in numberless occasions; for the revenues were under a public direction, and the instruments of a public benevolence. The monks, in general, were men without a possibility of converting the estates into a private fortune, living in denial of all self-interests, and whose avarice as well as labour was employed for a community; men, by whom personal poverty was considered as an honour, and implicit obedience was in the place of freedom. These houses might be once the product of enthusiasm; but they had ever been thought, and might now have been employed as, the instruments of wisdom. All this, however, availed nothing. The resentment of the king against the Pope, his love of power, and the joint rapine into which he found his parliament ready to concur with him, tempted them to a confiscation and robbery, or—as the church will ever consider it—to a sacrilege that was never equalled in any Christian country." [Ibidem, p. 450-1.]

> "That violent commotion, which o'erthrew,
> In town, and city, and sequestered glen,
> Altar, and cross, and church of solemn roof,
> And old religious house, pile after pile;
> And shook the tenants out into the fields,
> Like wild beasts without home!"—WORDSWORTH.

"The lay impropriator was bound by law to the performance of no works of mercy or charity. He owed no

obligation to receive the stranger, or to relieve the poor and friendless. The laity could neither be helped by his prayers, nor edified by his preaching. No school of learning, sacred or secular; no hospital or lazar-house leaned for habitual support on the new possessor of monastic revenues. The traveller from afar lifted up his eyes, and looked in vain above the gate for the legend that announced to him a heart, open as the wide portal that invited him to enter." [Monasticon Dioces. Exonien, &c., by George Oliver, D.D., Pref. x.]

G.

"They dreamt not of a perishable home
Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours of fear
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here."
WORDSWORTH.

"A dim and mighty minster of old time!
A temple shadowy with remembrances
Of the majestic past! The very light
Streams with a colouring of heroic days
In every ray, which leads through arch and aisle
A path of dreamy lustre, wandering back
To other years; and the rich-fretted roof,
And the wrought coronals of summer leaves,
Ivy and vine; and many a sculptured rose—
The tenderest image of mortality—
Binding the slender columns, whose light shafts
Cluster like stems in corn-sheaves—all these things
Tell of a race that nobly, fearlessly,
On their heart's worship poured a wealth of love!"
MRS. HEMANS' CATHEDRAL HYMN.

"Truth must be the aim of art; and, thank God, in the Catholic Church the type of art is not ideal, in a strict sense, but real. The older artists may have elevated and purified the models which they used, but they did not invent them. They found them in the Church, and

they formed their style upon them. And in the same place the Catholic artist must look for the same guidance. He will still find his St. Brunos, as Zurbeyran did, among his disciples the Carthusians, and his St. Bernards among the Cistercians; and he will be surprised to see again and again, before and around the altar, the attitudes, the arrangements, and even the countenances and bearing of figures and groups which have appeared to him masterly inventions, when seen in the old masters.....Protestantism presents no types of Christian art. It has destroyed the types of the past. It excludes as legendary all the most beautiful histories of the early Saints: it has quenched all sympathy for the favourite themes of mediæval painting, the Fathers of the desert, St. Benedict, and the great monastic heroes, and still more the inspirer, and the maturer of art, and of its poetry, the glorious St. Francis of Assisium. And as to the present, it allows no communion with the Saints in Heaven, and consequently no interest in having their effigies before our eyes: no living intercourse with blessed spirits, and therefore no right to bring them visibly into action. All ecstasy, supernatural contemplation, vision, and rapturous prayer, with the only approach to heavenly expression that earth can give; all miracles and marvellous occurrences, with the store of incident which they supply; all mingling in any one scene of the living and the blessed, the past and the present—in fine, all the poetry of art is coldly cut out, nay, strangled and quenched by the hard hand of Protestantism." [Dublin Review, June, 1847, vol. xxii. See also "Lives of the most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects of the Order of St. Dominic, by Father Marchese.]

H.

St. Antoninus draws the following resemblances of the Religious State, to the Garden of Paradise.

1st. Paradise was a garden planted by God Himself, and abounding with every kind of delight. The Religious State has likewise God for its author. From Him comes the grace of vocation, perseverance, and victory over temptation. From Him are received the rules and institutions of Religious Orders. God is the sole author of all. Hence, it appears, how perfect is the Religious State, and how overflowing with blessings, since it is the emanation of infinite wisdom, power, and love.

2nd. In Paradise the Almighty planted trees that were beautiful to the eye, and delightful to the taste. In the Religious State, as in a garden, grow all sorts of trees—that is, virtues,—most pleasing to the eye, and most delectable to the mind. What delicious fruits may not be gathered from the Eden of Religion? The tranquillity of an upright and peaceful conscience,—the solace of prayer and contemplation, &c. Here, also is the tree of life, that is, the abundant grace of God, from which the soul derives refreshment and supernatural existence. Of this tree we can gather the fruit at our pleasure and according to our necessities.

3rd. In the Garden of Paradise there was no oppressive heat, no cold, no hunger, no thirst, no fever, no bodily ailment. The air was at all times serene and temperate. In like manner, in the Religious State, we experience serenity of mind, and the stillness of subdued passions. The waters flow on gently in their quiet course, calm and clear.

4th. In Paradise, God gave Adam a companion to be a helpmate. In the Religious State, we have the aid of paternal counsel and example; and the union not only of

hearts, but of all ordinary and exterior matters, such as similarity of dress, exercise, and refreshment.

5th. Adam, before his fall, had no secular cares. He communed with God the day long; which is likewise the privilege of monks.

Between Paradise and the Religious State, St. Bernard makes the following comparison:—

The Religious State is no visible locality, but a Paradise of interior delights. We enter this garden not by our feet, but by our affections. We do not commend in it the beauty of the trees with their waving foliage, but the rich growth of spiritual virtues. It is the garden enclosed, through which the sealed fountain sends four streamlets; four brooks of living water gush from one well-head of wisdom. Here, lilies bloom in all their splendour; and the voice of the turtle is heard in this land. Here, the frankincense of the spouse breathes a fragrant odour, and aromatic spices perfume the air; for the blast from the north is hushed, and the south wind blows softly. In the midst is the tree of life, the apple of the canticles, more precious than all the trees of the wood—the shade of which refreshes the spouse, and the fruit of which is pleasant to his palate. Here, perpetuity dazzles the eye by its brightness. Truth with fair aspect cheers the heart, and the voice of the inward comforter fills the ear with joy and gladness. Here, through the sensations of hope are inhaled the most delightful odours of the rich field which the Lord hath blessed. Here, in delicious draughts, are quaffed the incomparable delights of charity; and the mind,—when all the thorns and briars are carefully weeded,—all anointed with the oil of mercy, sweetly reposes on the tranquillity of a good conscience.

Nor are these joys to be reckoned among the rewards to be enjoyed in eternity; no, but the portion and recompense of the soul in its present state of warfare;—not that which is promised to the Church hereafter, but that which

she actually enjoys—the hundredfold which is given in this world to those who have learned to despise it for Christ's sake.

But what wonder if the Religious State bears so great a resemblance to the earthly Paradise, since Paradise itself was but a type of Heaven? There is nothing so great and beautiful, says St. Basil, as the Religious State. Heaven is its perfect counterpart and antitype. The Religious State resembles Heaven.

1st. In the incorruptibility of a pure mind, that is, in chastity. As in Heaven, the inhabitants neither marry nor are given in marriage; so in the holy state of Religion.

2nd. In charity. The foundation of mutual charity, in both, is the love of God. In the Religious State, as in Heaven, there is a union of minds and hearts flowing from the love of God. As in Heaven, observes St. Chrysostom, all the angels rejoice together with the same joy, and exult in the same quietness; so is it in monasteries. The wealth of monks and of angels, says St. Basil, is the same—spiritual and not terrestrial,—and can be possessed by many without diminution.

3rd. In obedience. All the blessed are subject to one will—the will of God; so in the Religious State, all private and self-will is eradicated, and by the rule of a superior the will of God is made known in all things.

4th. In poverty. Among the saints there is no anxiety about gold or material riches—God is their wealth and their possession for ever. In like manner by the vow of poverty all private possessions are renounced in the monastery.

5th. In their occupation. The employment of angels and saints is the praise, the adoration, and the service of God. The same hallowed duties constitute the chief occupation of the Religious State. Religious persons renounce the world, and devote their days to prayer, meditation,

and the chaunting of the divine office, that they may prepare themselves for a happier union with the citizens of Heaven, in the pure and perfect worship of their Creator. The Religious State is "the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, and having the glory of God." Religious are celestial men; terrestrial angels.

6th. In happiness. There is great abundance of joy in the holy State of Religion. How sure and solid is the happiness of this State! how perennial and varied its delights! "Behold, now, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places, and bless ye the Lord."—Psalm cxxxiii. [Hieronymi Plati ex Soc. Jes. de bono Status Relig. lib. 3. cap. xiv. p. 524, &c.]

I.

"In the earlier part of the reign of Henry I. Pope Paschal II. exempted all the Religious Orders, in respect of their demesne lands, from the payment of tithes; and Pope Alexander III. in his brief to the Cistercian Abbot and convent of Rivaulx, dated November 20th, 1160, discharged all the possessions, actual and future, from such payment. [Dugdale's Monasticon Angl. vol. v. p. 283.] The same Pope, in his letter to the bishop of Treves, in 1179, after observing that some of his predecessors in the apostolical see, had granted to nearly all religious persons, 'decimas laborum suorum,' states that his immediate predecessor, (our countryman, Adrian IV.) had restricted the discharge from tithes, 'solis fratribus Cisterciensis ordinis, et templariis, et hospitalariis,' whilst their lands were in their own cultivation, or occupied at their

own expense, and not leased out to be cultivated by others. We further find that Pope Innocent IV. (who died in 1254,) discharged all the property of the Cistercians, which they had acquired before and even after the Council of Lateran, in 1215, from the payment of tithes. [Dugdale's Monasticon Angl. vol. v. p. 235.] But this must be understood of lands, kept and reserved in their own manurance, tillage, and occupation, for the maintenance of hospitality and good housekeeping." [Monasticon Dioecesis Exoniensis, by Geo. Oliver, D. D. Pref. x. The Bulls, Briefs, &c., conferring these privileges, may be seen in "Privilèges de l'Ordre de Citeaux," published at Paris, 1713.]

K.

St. Alberic soon found it requisite for the due observance of choir service, to adopt an institution, common at that period to all the monasteries of the west, the association with his religious of convert or lay-brothers. The institution existed before the time of St. Benedict. He, however, did not embody it as then and there needful in his Rule; for all his monks spoke the Latin language. But he foresaw the necessity which would arise for such a regulation in the duties of the monastery. "If any one shall be so slowful or negligent, that he will not or cannot either meditate or read, let some work be enjoined him, that he may be preserved from idleness."

Now when the Latin ceased to be a living language, and when the chanting of the divine office became an essential duty of the choir religious, and occupied a considerable portion of his time, and this, too, at certain appointed hours, it was found necessary to call in assistance

for the management of distant farms, and for the proper discharge of other employments connected with the subsistence of the monastery. Many unlettered persons desirous of leading a virtuous and retired life, but not bound to the divine office, were allowed the privileges of the monastic state, with a rule peculiar to their peculiar duties. This arrangement was found a very convenient and a very serviceable one to the cause of religion. For by it a state of holy retirement was provided for those, who were incompetent to discharge the duties of choir religious, or who had not a contemplative turn of mind, or disposition suited to the long chants and solemn services of the choir.

Thousands of saints in heaven owe their salvation to this wise and considerate institution. Without its appropriate duties and regulations for their peculiar feelings and inclinations, they would probably have never entered the cloister, but have continued to float down the corrupt stream of the world, to the gulph of eternal perdition. Convert brothers were common in English monasteries in the 9th century; that is, nearly three hundred years before the commencement of Citeaux. The Fathers of Citeaux could not, says the "Exordium Parvum," observe the precepts of the Rule day and night satisfactorily, as they wished, without the assistance of lay brothers. At first, they were not received to a full participation of the benefits of the religious state; but left, as other lay persons, to the jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese in which they were residing. But this partition wall was soon removed from the Order of Citeaux. The convert brothers made at their profession the solemn vows of poverty and chastity, included in the one of obedience. They made also the solemn promise of stability. [De Synodo Diœcesana, c. xi. Decretum Summi Benedict. XIV.] They shared equally with the choir religious in all the spiritual and temporal advantages of the monastery; and

at death they were buried with the same prayers and ceremonies. The minor distinctions of colour and shape in dress, &c., were accidental, or arose from circumstances existing at the time of the institution, or they were such as propriety and good order demanded. But they did not interfere with the essential duties of the monastic state.

"It was to the convert brothers," says Dom. Calmet, "that the Cistercians were mainly indebted for their splendid churches." The same interchange of benefits, and the same harmony between the choir and the convert religious of the Cistercian Order, continue to the present day. This strict union presents a beautiful illustration of the twelfth chapter of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians:—"The body is not one member, but many. If the foot should say: Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it, therefore, not of the body? And if the ear should say: Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it, therefore, not of the body? If the whole body were the eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God hath set the members, every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.....and hath tempered the body together, giving the more abundant honour to that which wanted it, that there might be no schism in the body, but the members might be mutually careful one for another." [See Dom. Calmet's "Commentaires" on the Rule of St. Benedict, Vol. i. ch. 2. and Mabillon's "Annales Ordinis St. Benedicti," Vol. v. page 403.]

L.

"A geologist is loud in his admiration of a tooth, of a mamoth, or a mastodon; an antiquarian falls into an ecstasy over a bronze from Herculaneum, a coin of Caligula, or a pipkin from Etruria: how much more deserving of our estimation are the magnificent remains of our ancestors, who designed and built as men hardly ever did before, who laid every stone as if the eye of God was upon it; who, in fact, built for eternity, as the painter of old (when upbraided with the paucity of his pictures) said, 'Pingo in æternum!'"

TINTERN ABBEY.

"Yet still thy turrets drink the light
Of summer-evening's softest ray,
And ivy garlands, green and bright,
Still mantle thy decay;
And calm and beauteous as of old,
Thy wandering river glides in gold!"

ALARIC A. WATTS.

"In the centre of a sylvan valley, surrounded by solemn woods, stands Tintern Abbey, the glory of monastic ruins—the gem of the Wye. What an air of peace does the valley wear! How sequestered from worldly turmoil! Surely this is the spot of all others for a structure dedicated to the worship of the Most High. Sir Richard Colt Hoare remarks, 'This abbey, (as to the finest coup d'œil,) exceeds every ruin that I have seen in England and Wales;' and Archdeacon Coxe, speaking of Tintern in his Historical Tour through Monmouthshire, says, 'the first impressions are those of grandeur and sublimity. But as these emotions subside, and we descend from the contemplation of the whole to the examination of the parts, we are no less struck with the regularity of the plan, the

lightness of the architecture, and the delicacy of the ornaments; we feel that elegance is its characteristic no less than grandeur, and that the whole is a combination of the beautiful and sublime.'

"Tintern by moonlight is solemnly grand; and the effect of the silvery beams of that planet, casting a mild radiance over the 'wild secluded scene,' may be imagined but not described. Reed, in his remains, thus eloquently speaks of Tintern by moonlight.

"'The great tree or vegetable rock, or emperor of the oaks, (if you please) before which I bowed with a sort of reverence in the fields of Tintern, and which for so many ages has borne all the blasts and bolts of Heaven; I should deem it a gratification of a superior kind, to approach again with 'unsandalled foot,' to pay the same homage, and to kindle with the same devotion. But I should find amidst the magnificent ruins of the adjoining abbey, something of a sublimer cast, to interest and give poignancy to my feelings. I must be alone. My mind must be calm and pensive. It must be midnight. The moon half veiled in clouds, must be just emerging from behind the neighbouring hills. All must be silent, except the wind gently rushing among the ivy of the ruins. The river lulling by its faint murmurings, its guardian genius to repose, and the owl, whose funeral shriek would sometimes die along the walls in mysterious echoes. I should then invoke the ghosts of the abbey; and fancy, with one stroke of her magic wand, would rouse them from their dusty beds, and lead them into the centre of the ruin. I should approach their shadowy existences with reverence, make inquiries concerning the customs and manners, and genius, and fate of antiquity, desire to have a glimpse of the destiny of future ages, and enter upon conversations which would be too sacred, and even dangerous to communicate.

"We cannot do better than sum up our account of this

'seat of devotion, solitude, and desolation,' in the impressive language of Bucke:

"As the Abbey of Tintern is the most beautiful and picturesque of all our Gothic monuments, so is the situation one of the most sequestered and delightful. One more abounding in that peculiar kind of scenery which excites the mingled sensations of content, religion, and enthusiasm, it is impossible to behold. There every arch infuses a solemn energy, as it were, into inanimate nature; a sublime antiquity breathes mildly in the heart; and the soul, pure and passionless, appears susceptible of that state of tranquillity which is the perfection of every earthly wish." [The Saturday Magaz. Aug. 25th, 1838. No. 394.]

KIRKSTALL ABBEY.

"A place once so famous," says Thos. Gent, in his History of Rippon, "excited my curiosity to ride thither early one morning in order to view it. No sooner it appeared to my eyes, at a distance, from the neighbouring hill, but it really produced in me an inward veneration. Well might the chief of the anchorites, leave the southern parts for this pleasant abode, and the abbots also desire so delightful a situation. I left my horse at a style; and passing over it, came down by a gentle descent towards its awful ruins; which, good God! were enough to strike the most hardened heart into the softest and most serious reflections; to think, where once the humble knees were bent to seek Omnipotence in ancient forms, it should now have a worse fate than other like venerable buildings."

"The architecture of Kirkstall Abbey," it is observed, "lies open to much observation. The great merit of this structure, as a study for those who are desirous of assigning, by internal evidence, a proper date to every ancient building, is its unity of design and execution. Kirkstall Abbey is a monument of the skill, the taste, and per-

severance of a single man. There are in the original fabric no appearances of after-thought; no deviations from the first plan. Not only the arrangement, proportions, and relations of the different apartments are rigidly conformed to that peculiar principle, which prevailed in the construction of religious houses, but every moulding and ornament appears to have been wrought from models previously studied and adapted to the general plan." [Moule's English Counties Delineated.]

FOUNTAINS.

"Its very name is suggestive of a world of pleasant associations, green ruins, with many a legend or story hanging about them, picturesque and attractive as themselves; quiet woods and delightfully unquiet waters; nooks and corners amongst rocks, or by water banks, or beneath great overhanging arches; a place, in fine, for deep emotion and elevated thought, where one seems to stand between the Past and the Future, unaffected by all the disturbing influences of the Present; and to look on all things with a sense of newly aroused powers of apprehension, of the truth or falsehood that is in them, of newly awakened desire to draw from these chewings of the cud, of sweet and bitter fancy, the most wholesome nutriment for the every-day business of life. It is no wonder that Fountains Abbey should have obtained so high or extensive a reputation. It is situated in a beautiful and romantic valley, through which runs the Skell, and in the vicinity of Studley Park and pleasure grounds. On the whole the Abbey ruins form the most perfect specimen that the country possesses, of what may perhaps be called the most perfect architectural time—the age of Henry III. and of Westminster Abbey. All the walls of both church and monastery yet stand, though roofless, and with dilapidated windows. The majestic tower from its unusual

position at the north end of the transept, still rises upward in serene grandeur. We may walk through the nave, and admire the arch of its once glorious eastern window; from thence wander into the 'ruined choir,' and listen to hymns of praise, albeit the choristers are of a tinier race than of yore. The Chapter House yet tells us of the Abbots who sat there in due course of spiritual government, and some of whose tombs now lie beneath our feet, with half legible inscriptions; we can still perceive, over the chapter house, where the library was situated in which the monks read, and the adjoining scriptorium wherein they wrote. It is as long a walk as ever to pace from end to end of the cloisters, (300 feet in length,) and almost as picturesque, with those curious arches overhead, formed by the mazy intersections of the groinings of the roof; the kitchen is ready at any moment to glow with 'unwonted fires,' and renew those old hospitalities, of which its two immense fire-places give one such an expansive idea; the very garden of the monastery smells sweet and looks fair, with quivering leaves and 'flowres fresh of hue.'" [Old Eng. vol. i. Book ii. c. 2.]

NETLEY ABBEY.

"It is said that Netley Abbey tower was once a mark for seamen. Our forefathers designated the scene amid which the ruins are situated, Letley, or Pleasant Place, the most beautiful features of which are the fine bay called Southampton Water, the gentle slopes of rich green verdure, and the woods that screen the abbey from the busy world. Grandly the wintry blast sounds in these woods, as it sweeps through crypt and chapter-house, and refectory, and seems to raise in the chapel (whose rich roof lies broken on the ground, and whose interior is exposed to the gaze of all the host of heaven) echoes of long-departed strains of prayer and praise.

"Fallen pile! I ask not what has been thy fate;—
But when the weak winds, wafted from the main,
Through each lone arch, like spirits that complain,
Come hollow to my ear, I meditate
On this world's passing pageant, and the lot
Of those who once might proudly, in their prime,
Have stood with giant port; till, by time
Or injury, their ancient boast forgot,
They might have sunk, like thee; though thus forlorn
They lift their heads with venerable hairs
Besprent, majestic yet, and as in scorn
Of mortal vanities and short lived cares;
E'en so dost thou, lifting thy forehead grey,
Smile at the tempest, and time's sweeping sway."

[Old England, Book ii. chap ii.] BOWLES.

MELROSE ABBEY.

In this fabric, in Mr. Hutchinson's opinion, are the finest lessons in, and the greatest variety of, Gothic ornaments that the island affords. Francis Drake, writing in 1742, also observes, "Mailrose, I shall take it upon me to say, has been the most exquisite structure of the kind in either kingdom." Lastly comes the poet, also pointing out, as the great architectural attractions of Melrose, its intricate and exquisite stone carving:

"No herb nor floweret glistened there
But was carved in the cloister arches as fair."

And he settled the business. By day and night, the great and small crowded about it in consequence of the descriptions in the famous "Lay"—

"If thou wouldst view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild but to flout the ruins grey.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruins central tower;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seemed framed of ebon and ivory;

When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave;
Then go—but go alone the while,
Then view St. David's ruined pile;
And, home returning, soothly swear
Was never scene so sad and fair."—*Old England.*

"We read in the chronicle of Melrose, at the date of 1259, that there was a monk in that abbey, who, for twenty years was never known to use his bed; he slept before the altars. Even in the winter he used to spend a great part of the night in playing sacred melodies on the harp in honour of the Blessed Virgin. By day, while reading the Psalter, he used to sit near the door of the church with a basket of bread; and no poor person departed without having something to carry away from it." [Mores Catholici, B. x. p. 187.]

M

The Cistercian Order became so powerful that it governed for more than a century almost the whole of Europe, both in spiritual and temporal affairs. Besides four Popes whom it has given to the Church, it enrols amongst its children many Cardinals and Bishops, and a very great number of spiritual writers. St. Bernard saw from his own monastery of Clairvaux, one of his religious seated in the chair of St. Peter, six others Cardinals, and more than thirty bishops. [Histoire de l'Etablissement des Ordres Religieux &c., par M. Hermant, (print 1697) ch. xxi. and xxii.]

From the Cistercian Order were chosen four Popes, Cardinals many, fourteen Patriarchs. [Democharis lib. 2. de Sacrificio Missæ.] Eight hundred Archbishops, one

thousand four hundred bishops. [Barnaba de Montalbo in suis Chronicis. Laurentius de Zamora in Monarchia mystica Ecclesiæ, Nicolaus Brabo in Vita Sti. Benedicti, admit the same number of Patriarchs, Archbishops, and Bishops.]

Henry, the son and brother of a king of France, preferred the poor and humble life of Clairvaux to the grandeur of the world.

Boson and Peter, princes of the same royal house, became Cistercian monks, the one at Clairvaux, and the other at Igni.

William of Montpellier, from whom have descended almost all the kings in Christendom, retired to Grandselve, a Cistercian House, that he might live as a simple religious.

The abbey of Vaux de Cernai saw amongst its inmates, Thibaud, of the house of Montmorenci; and Morimond beheld Evard, Count of Mons, in Hainault, amongst convert brothers, watching the flocks.

Three sons of a king in the east entered Pontigni, and became religious. Let us travel on to Germany.

In Germany, Otho and Conrad, the grandsons of emperors, and the cousins of emperors, embraced the Cistercian life, the one at Morimond, and the other at Holy Cross, in Austria.

The two Amadeus's, father and son, princes of the empire, withdrew from the world to become Cistercian monks, the one at Bonnevaux, the other at Clairvaux. The two German princes, Conrad and Charles, consecrated themselves to the service of Jesus Christ, the first at Villers, the second at Hemmerod.

If we travel from Germany to Italy, we behold Gumar, king of Sardinia, leaving his kingdom, to become a monk at Clairvaux.

In Spain, Peter, brother of Alphonsus, king of Portugal, became a Cistercian in the monastery of Alcobacia, in Por-

tugal; Ferdinand, son of the king of Arragon, Bernard, a Prince of the Saracens, and Arnold, son of the Duke of Narbonne, became Cistercians in the monastery of Popoletum.

If we journey northwards, we behold Alexander, son and heir of the king of Scotland, renouncing the possession of a crown, and retiring to the Cistercian cloisters of Foigni; Aelred and Walthen, connected with the royal families of England and Scotland, both Cistercian monks, the one abbot of Rievaux, the other of Melrose.

In Denmark, Eschilus, Primate of Denmark, Legate of the Holy See, and Regent of Sweden and Denmark, renounced his dignities, and became a religious at Clairvaux. Eric, the king of Denmark, became a Cistercian in a house founded in his own kingdom. ["Essai de l'Histoire de l'Ordre de Citeaux," par le R. P. Dom Pierre le Nain, vol. 9, c. xix., Conclus.]

"Index Dignitatum et Munerum quibus sancti et Beati Ordinis Cisterciensis eminuerunt." An Index of the dignities and offices by which the saints and those worthy of the title of Blessed of the Cistercian order were distinguished:—

Four Popes: Alexander III., Eugenius III., Benedict XII., and Urban IV.

Twelve cardinals, three kings, four queens, ten sons of kings, eight daughters of kings, sixteen princes, counts, and barons, &c., twenty-six archbishops, sixty bishops, twenty-eight generals of the order, one hundred and fifty-six abbots, &c., &c. See Menologium Chrysostomi Henriquez for the names of these and a very great number more, at the conclusion of the volume. He gives the names of eight hundred and eighty-five, either sancti or beati. [A few scanty gleanings.]

Seal of the Cistercian Order.

"The original common seal of the Cistercian Order in England and Wales is still in existence at Lullworth Castle, and in perfect preservation. It is circular, has a church engraven upon it, and bears a shield, containing the arms of Bindon Abbey, in Dorsetshire, with this inscription:

SIGILLV · COE · CAPLI · GENALIS · ORDIS · CISTERCIEN · IN ANGL · ET WALL·

[Monasticon Diocesis Exoniensis, by G. Oliver, D. D., p. 339.]

N

DECRETUM

SACRÆ CONGREGATIONIS DE PROPAGANDA FIDE.

Referente infrascripto Pro-Secretario super statu Monachorum Cisterciensium Strictioris Observantiæ in Monte S. Bernardi Vicariatus Centralis in Anglia, ac perpensis precibus eorumdem Monachorum ut Abbatiæ titulo et gradu monasterium illud, decoraretur; habita insuper ratione boni testimonii quod iisdem reddidit R.P.D. Thomas Walsh, Espiscopus Cambysopolitanus, atque in præfato Districtu Vicarius Apostolicus, Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide, omnibus maturè perpensis, atque illud potissimum intendens ut consueta regiminis forma invecta regularis observantia melius in dies constituatur et Christianæ perfectionis exempla augeantur, supradictis precibus annuendum censuit ea ratione quæ constitutæ reperiuntur Abbatiæ eorumdem Monachorum Cisterciensium Congregationis, vulgo S. Mariæ de Magna Trappa in

Gallia, servatis Constitutionibus Apostolicis, ac Decretis Sacræ Congregationis Episcoporum et Regularium.

Hanc vero Sacræ Congregationis sententiam Sanctissimo Domino Nostro Pio Divina Providentia P.P. IX. relatam ab eodem Pro-Secretario in audentia diei 9 mensis hujus sanctitas sua benignè probavit. Contrariis quibuscumque non obstantibus.

Datum Romæ ex Ædibus Sacræ Congregationis de Propaganda Fide.

Die 26 Julii, Anno, 1848.

Gratis sine ulla omnino solutione quocumque titulo.

J. Ph. Card Fransonius, Præf.

DECRETUM

SACRÆ CONGREGATIONIS DE PROPAGANDA FIDE.

Cum intra limites Diocesis Waterfordiensis ac Lismoriensis in Hibernia Abbatia reperiatur Monachorum Cisterciensium Strictioris Observantiæ sub titulo Sanctæ Mariæ de Monte Melleario ; item Instituti ejusdem alterum extet Monasterium in Centrali Angliæ Vicariatu Apostolico de Monte Sancti Bernardi nuncupatum Abbatiæ gradu pariter nuper decoratum. Monachi vero in utroque degentis ad regularem observantiam Vitæ custodiendam et removendos abusus qui sensim possent irrepere, valde opportunum duxerint, unionem horum Monasteriorum cum Congregatione Cisterciensium Sanctæ Mariæ de Magna Trappa in Gallia idque enixis precibus postulaverint idemque probaverint Waterfordiensis Episcopus, necnon Vicarius Apostolicus præfati Districtus Angliæ, atque etiam Vicarius Generalis Ordinis Cistersiensis, Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide annuendum precibus censuit ut, præfatæ Abbatiæ ac supradictum Congregationem provisoria tamen ratione ac donec aliter non fuerit provisum aggregantur servatis Constitutionibus Apostolicis necnon Decretis Sacri

Consilii pro Negotiis Episcoporum et Regularium quoad regimen ejusdem Congregationis ; ea vero excipiuntur quæ rerum inspectis adjunctis ac locorum distantia observata difficilia noscantur in iis enim per Sacræ Congregationem aliter erit providendum.

Hanc vero Sacræ Congregationis sententiam Sanctissimo Domino Nostro Pio Divina Providentia P. P. IX., relatam ab infrascripto ejusdem Pro-Secretario in Audientia diei 9. hujus mensis Sanctitas sua benignè in omnibus probavit. Contrariis quibuscumque non obstantibus.

Datum Romæ ex Ædibus Sacræ Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, Die 26 Julii, Anno 1848.

Gratis sine ulla omnino solutione quocumque titulo.

J. Ph. Card. Fransonius, Præf.

DECRETUM

SACRÆ CONGREGATIONIS DE PROPAGANDA FIDE.

Cum Abbatia gradu auctum fuerit Monasterium de Monte S. Bernardi Cisterciensium Strictioris Observantia in Vicariatu Apostolico Angliæ Centrali, proindeque de Abbate sit providendum Sacra Congregatio ad Officium hujusmodi assumendum duxit Presbyterum ejusdem Instituti Bernardum Palmer, qui de præfato Monasterio optimè meritus existit, quique tum Monachorum suffragiis, tum etiam Vicarii Apostolici testimonio pro hujusmodi munere commendatur.

Cum vero præfatum Monasterium Congregationi S. Mariæ de Magna Trappa fuerit aggregatum novum Abbatem servatis servandis reliquis ejusdem Congregationis adnumerandum : in posterum vero consuetam electionis formam in ea Congregatione vigentem pro supradicta quoque Abbatiæ servandam duxit.

Hanc vero Sacræ Congregationis sententiam Sanctissimo Domino Nostro Divina Providentia P. P. IX., relatam in

audientia die 9 hujus mensis Sanctitas sua benignè in omnibus probavit. Contrariis quibuscumque non obstantibus.

Datum Romæ ex Ædibus Sacræ Congregationis de Propaganda Fide Die 26 Julii, Anno 1848.

Gratis sine ulla omnino solutione quocumque titulo.

J. Ph. CARD. FRANSONIUS, PRÆF.

O

A young man, not very respectable in his appearance, came to the Abbey late on Saturday evening, the 20th of January 1849, and asked for lodgings, stating that he had walked a great deal during the day, and felt very much exhausted. After receiving refreshment, he retired to rest in the room appointed for him ; and on the following morning, stated his name to be Francis Augustus Arkwright, Cromford. He was the son, he said, of the celebrated Mr. Arkwright of Derby, and in twelve months hence would attain his majority, and be entitled to £5,000 a year. A catholic gentleman had been visiting his father's house, and had made a convert of him. When his father and mother heard of this, they began against him a bitter persecution. This was the sole reason of his leaving home. He had seized the opportunity whilst his parents were out in the carriage to effect his escape, and had changed his own clothes for the inferior dress he then had on, that he might the better elude detection. In this disguise he had made the best of his way to the monastery, as to a place of safety.

The guest-master observed that, no doubt, he had received a good education, probably at one of the universities. He replied, in truth, he had not ; for he had been a

spoiled child. Being desired to write his name in the visitors' book, he declined, saying that his hands were very cold, and asked the guest-master to have the kindness to write it for him. At this strange request the idea flashed strongly upon the mind of the religious, that he who had made it was an impostor. He, therefore, desired the young man to warm his hands at the fire, which, at that time, was blazing in his room, that he might be enabled to comply with the rule prescribed to visitors. Thus pressed, he wrote his name, Francis Augustus Arkwright, Cromford.

This confirmed the impression that he was acting the part of deception. When told that he was an entire stranger, and that it would be desirable before his introduction into the monastery as a guest, to receive the testimony of some respectable person confirmatory of his statement, he immediately mentioned the name of some gentleman in Derby. He, likewise, entered into many details concerning his present allowance of income, and what great things he would do for the monastery, when he would be put into full possession of his fortune.

On the Sunday morning, the guest-master informed the Father Abbot of the stranger's arrival, and the strong reasons he had to believe him to be an impostor. Hence, he humbly requested the superior to see the young man, and dismiss him. The Abbot saw him, and entertained the same view of him as the guest-master. But as this is Sunday, he said, he may remain to-day; to-morrow, however, tell him he must depart. Before leaving the monastery, the young man made the suspicious request that his hair might be cut short; but the proposal was immediately rejected. He succeeded, however, in obtaining his wish at a house in the neighbourhood. Then hastening onwards to Loughborough, he there wound himself into the good graces of the Primitive Methodists, to whom he represented himself as a monk who had just made his escape

from the Monastery of Mount St. Bernard. He drew a lively picture of the cruelties which he had endured whilst in the prison of the monastery, and met with profound sympathy from the credulous people that listened to him. When he had obtained the relief he sought, he travelled to Leicester ; and there, by the recital of the same tragical story, obtained more money.

He had heard of the infamous story of Maria Monk, and of its extensive circulation and great popularity; prompted by diabolical malice, he was anxious to be the hero of a similar narrative. Hence, in these his rambles, he was in search of a neighbourhood where he could securely and conveniently concoct his plans, and obtain the assistance of the public press.

In April he reached Wednesbury, in Staffordshire, and there made friends with the Ranters, or Primitive Methodists. Here, and in the populous district around Wednesbury, he told his tale of woe with great plausibility, and was listened to with deep sympathy by rich and poor. Thus successful, he became the great lion of the district. He preached in all directions, attended love-feasts and prayer meetings, and, as if aided by demoniacal influence, poured forth tears without the slightest effort. Hence, he moved and melted his audience at pleasure.

In the month of May, appeared his tissue of barefaced falsehoods, in the form of a Pamphlet, entitled: "A Narrative of six years' captivity and suffering, among the Monks of St. Bernard, at Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire. By Wm. T. Jefferys." The title of the book was certainly very attractive to the enemies of the Catholic Religion. On the 1st of June, a portion of it was copied into the *Protestant Watchman*, the organ of the Protestant Association, then newly established in Birmingham, with a promise that the remainder should follow as soon as convenient.

Thus the tale of horror obtained a speedy circulation ;

and thousands believed it to be the genuine production of an innocent sufferer. But the greatest excitement it created was in the districts adjacent to the abbey. Threats of the most violent nature against this establishment, were heard swelling upon the breeze, like the rumbling of the distant storm. And indeed we cannot wonder that such ebullitions of feeling should have arisen in the minds of people, when we consider the purport of the pamphlet.

Jefferys describes his mother as a firm supporter of the Established Church; his father as an intolerant Papist. At his mother's death, he and his father entered the Monastery of the Order of Mount St. Bernard, and were received by six priests. He, of course, was the unwilling companion of his father. The moment he entered the Monastery gate, he felt that he was a prisoner, "like a bird shut up in a cage;" and that his liberty was gone for ever. His father signed the vow which was read over to them; but he, though the pen was placed in his hand, would not. His clothes were then taken from him, and he was arrayed in the dress of the community. He was baptized against his will, and Christened the strange name of St. Ceil. The life of this saint was given him to read; but the best thing, he could do with such nonsense was to light his fire with it. He was allowed no communication with his father, whose mind had been soured against him by the priests. He was twice bled, though not aware he required such treatment. Several monks made their escape. One young man, named, St. Theophilus, was pursued and kidnapped. When brought back, his mouth was muffled, his arms tied, so that he could make no resistance. What became of him, or how they disposed of him, I know not, I never saw him afterwards. Jefferys states that his own body had been punctured by a sharp instrument, by his own father. He had been confined in a small room during six weeks, upon one meal of bread and water per day. This confinement had been repeated with

a great deal of similar trash, which no one free from gross prejudice, could for a moment credit. He completes his catalogue of diabolical falsehoods, by the narration of his wonderful escape.

To show the *animus* of the man, and by what spirit he was prompted in this contrivance for the ruin of his innocent neighbour, he tells the public in his introduction: "With the assistance of a kind friend, the following narrative has been prepared for the press, in the hope that it may be the means of doing some good by bringing to light some of the hidden things of darkness, that they may be made manifest, by opening, if possible, the eyes of those who have been deceived by the priests of Rome, by preventing others from being caught in the trap laid for them by the Jesuits, in making Popery to appear as much like Protestantism as possible, by showing what Popery really is, where it can exercise its power in the present day, in Protestant England, unseen by the world—by undeceiving those who look upon Popery with a favourable eye, as if the system was changed," &c.

The detection of Jeffery's villany did, indeed, "bring to light some of the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of evil spirits;" for the person who was the chief support of Jefferys, wrote at the end of the fabrication of lies: "I hope this little book will find its way into our sunday and day schools, that the children instructed therein, may be taught to prize their precious, their glorious privileges, *won for them at the Reformation, &c.**"

In a postscript, he adds: "Land has been purchased in this town, (Wednesbury), near to the Parish Church, for the purpose of erecting a Roman Catholic Chapel thereupon. This timely exposure of the practical workings of

* The precious, the glorious privileges of the Reformation, were curiously enough all won in a similar manner. See the Rev. S. R. Maitland's Letters on Fox's Acts and Monuments, &c.

Popery will, I trust, have its intended effect upon the inhabitants, by showing them what the Popish system really is, that is to be introduced into this parish."

Fortunately for the cause of innocence and truth, a young man in Birmingham, who had been an inmate of the monastery some years, saw the pamphlet for sale in the printer's window, and was prompted by curiosity to look into it, when he at once perceived the infamous nature of the publication, and warned the printer of its falsehood. The latter wrote to the abbey to ask if such a person as Jefferys had ever been a member of the community. The answer was in the negative. The guest-master, suspecting that Jefferys might probably be the identical Francis Augustine Arkwright, Cromford, obtained permission from his superior to prove the truth of his conjecture by a personal interview.

By the assistance of Mr. Maher, the Catholic bookseller in Birmingham, he succeeded in establishing the truth of his suspicions. The impostor, still maintaining, in the most solemn manner, the truth of his story, his friends were invited to a strict investigation of the matter by bringing Jefferys to the monastery, and there subjecting him to a calm and impartial examination. So just and reasonable a proposal could not be with honour or justice refused.

Accordingly, on Tuesday, the 26th of June, 1849, numerous bodies of persons were seen, about mid-day, advancing towards the monastery in various directions. Many had already seated themselves on the various ledges of rock around the summit of Mount Calvary. For the news of the intended investigation had spread instantaneously, almost like the wild-fire in the prairies of America. Ere long, therefore, an immense concourse of people had collected around the abbey, anxiously revolving in their minds the result of this inquiry. And it was evident that it would terminate either in the condemnation of Jefferys, or in the destruction of the abbey. Little excitement,

however, was felt by the community, who displayed the cheerful confidence of perfect innocence.

Jefferys, and about ten of his friends, were admitted within the abbey gates, and conducted to the large room over the lodge. There also were assembled, from the immediate neighbourhood, a few friends of the community. Ambrose Lisle Phillipps, Esq., of Grace Dieu Manor, was called to the chair, that due order might be observed in the process of the examination.

The following is an abstract of the investigation, given by the two persons who arranged and printed Jefferys pamphlet. They printed and circulated at their own expense, four thousand copies of this retraction :—

"We, the undersigned, William S. Nayler, of Wednesbury, in the county of Stafford, and Thomas Ragg, of Birmingham, in the county of Warwick, do hereby testify and declare.....

"4th. That for the purpose of the said investigation, we, the undersigned, in company with the Rev. Mr. Cole, of Wednesbury, and a gentleman deputed to accompany the undersigned Thomas Ragg by the Birmingham Protestant Association, took William Thomas Jefferys over to Charnwood Forest, on Tuesday, June 26th, 1849. That after he had vainly endeavoured to find the house where he said he had left his monk's habit, and obtained a change of clothes, we took him into the monastery, where he was fully identified as one who had been entertained in the guest-rooms for a few days, in the month of January last, when he had written his name in the guest book, as Francis Augustus Arkwright. That, on being more closely questioned as to the statements contained in his narrative, he showed his entire ignorance of everything beyond what he had previously learned in the guest-room. He did not know the monastic names of any of the brethren; he did not know what they ate, or what they drank, nor where, nor how they slept. On being asked to point

out the room in which he had been placed in solitary confinement, he pointed out one whose door never had a lock upon it, or any other outside fastening; and being asked to point out where he slept, he wandered to and fro about the place, without being able to find his way into the dormitory; and at length returned into the open square, where, after repeated appeals to confess his guilt before God, he tacitly acknowledged it by falling on his knees before the reverend superior, and bursted into tears.

"5th. We, therefore, the undersigned, do hereby declare our deep and solemn conviction, that the narrative of the said William Thomas Jefferys is a tissue of the grossest and most unwarrantable falsehoods; and having taken him safely to prison, to suffer the punishments due to his misdeeds, we feel it our bounden duty to publish this statement to the world, as some little reparation for the injury we have been the innocent means of inflicting on the community of Mount St. Bernard. And we hereby, in conclusion, express our heartfelt thanks to the reverend abbot, the reverend prior, and all the fathers and brethren in the monastery, for the surpassing kindness with which we were received, the readiness with which they lent us every aid during the painful investigation, and the genuine hospitality with which we were entertained after the investigation was over.

"Signed, { "W. S. Nayler. / "Thomas Ragg."

Jefferys was sentenced at the Petty Sessions, held at Handsworth, the 30th of June, 1849, to be committed as a rogue and vagabond to Stafford gaol, for three months, with hard labour.

CHARTA CHARITATIS,

STATUTA PRIMORDIALIA ET FUNDAMENTALIA ORDINIS CISTERCIENSIS.

CAPUT I.

1. Quia unius veri Regis, Domini et Magistri nos omnes servos licèt inutiles, esse cognoscimus, idcircò abbatibus et confratribus nostris monachis, quos per diversa loca Dei pietas per nos miserrimos hominum sub regulari disciplina ordinaverit, nullam terrenæ commoditatis seu rerum temporalium exactionem imponimus: prodesse enim illis omnibusque Sanctæ Ecclesiæ filiis cupientes, nihil quod eos gravet, nihil quod eorum substantiam minuat, erga eos agere disponimus ; ne dum nos abundantes de eorum paupertate esse cupimus, avaritiæ malum quod secundùm Apostolum idolorum servitus comprobatur, evitare non possimus.

2. Curam tamen animarum illorum, gratiâ charitatis, retinere volumus, ut si quando à proposito et observantia sanctæ Regulæ, quod absit, declinare tentaverint, per nostram solicitudinem ad rectitudinem vitæ redire possint.

3. Nunc ergo volumus illisque præcipimus ut Regulam beati Benedicti per omnia observent sicut in Novo Monasterio* observatur ; non alium inducant sensum in lectionem sanctæ Regulæ, sed sicut antecessores nostri sancti patres, monachi videlicet Novi Citeaux Monasterii, intellexerunt et tenuerunt, et nos hodie intelligimus et tenemus, ita et isti intelligant et teneant.

4. Et quia omnes monachos ipsorum ad nos venientes

* Citeaux.

in claustro nostro recipimus, et ipsi similiter nostros in claustris suis recipiunt : Ideo nobis opportunum videtur, et hoc etiam volumus, ut mores, et cantum, et libros omnes ad omnes horas diurnas, et nocturnas, et ad missas necessarios, secundùm formam morum et librorum novi Monasterii possideant ; quatenus in actibus nostris nulla sit discordia, sed unâ charitate, unâ Regulâ, similibusque vivamus moribus.

5. Nec aliqua Ecclesia vel persona Ordinis nostri, adversus communia ipsius Ordinis instituta, privilegium à quolibet postulare audeat, vel obtentum modo quolibet retinere.

CAPUT II.

6. Cum verò Abbas Novi Monasterii ad aliquod horum cœnobiorum visitandi gratiâ venerit, abbas illius loci, ut Ecclesiam Novi Monasterii suæ Ecclesiæ matrem esse recognoscat, cedat ei in omnibus locis sui monasterii, et ipse Abbas adveniens locum illius abbatis, quandiu ibi manserit, teneat.

7. Excepto quòd non in hospitio sed in refectoris cum fratribus, propter disciplinam servandam, comedat, nisi abbas loci illius defuerit: Similiter et omnes supervenientes nostri Ordinis abbates faciant ; quòd si plures supervenerint, et abbas illius loci defuerit, prior illorum in hospitio comedat. Et hoc excipitur, quòd abbas illius loci, etiam in præsentia majoris abbatis, suos novitios post regularum probationem benedicet.

8. Abbas quoque Novi Monasterii caveat ne quicquam præsumat tractare, aut ordinare, aut contingere, de rebus illius loci ad quem venerit, contra abbatis vel fratrum voluntatem.

9. Si autem præcepta Regulæ vel nostri Ordinis instituta intellexerit in eodem loco prævaricari, cum consilio præsentis abbatis charitativè studeat fratres corrigere ; si

verò abbas loci non affuerit, nihilominus corrigat quod sinistrum invenerit.

10. Semel per annum visitet abbas majoris Ecclesiæ per se vel per aliquem de coabbatibus suis, omnia cœnobia quæ ipse fundaverit: et si fratres ampliùs visitaverit inde magis gaudeant.

11. Domum autem Cisterciensem semel per seipsos visitent quatuor primi Abbates de Firmitate, de Pontigniaco, de Claravalle, et de Morimundo, die quâ inter se constituerint, præter annuum capitulum Generale, nisi fortè aliquem eorum gravis ægritudo detineat.

12. Cum autem aliquis abbas nostri Ordinis ad Novum Monasterium venerit, reverentia abbati congrua ei exhibeatur: stallum Abbatis loci illius teneat et in hospitio comedat, si tamen Abbas defuerit; si verò præsens fuerit, nihil horum agat, sed in refectorio comedat: Prior autem negotia Domûs disponat.

13. Inter abbatias illas quæ se alterutras non genuerint, ista, lex erit. Omnis abbas in omnibus locis sui monasterii coabbati suo cedat advenienti, ut impleatur illud quod scriptum est, *honore invicem prævenientes:* si duo aut eo ampliùs convenerint, qui prior erit de advenientibus, locum superiorem tenebit; omnes tamen præter abbatum loci illius in refectorio comedent, ut suprà diximus: aliàs autem ubicumque convenerint, secundùm tempus abbatiarum suarum, ordinem suum tenebunt, ut cujus Ecclesia fuerit antiquior, ille sit prior; ubicumque verò consederint, humilient sibi mutuò.

14. Cùm verò aliqua Ecclesiarum nostrarum Dei gratiâ adeo creverit, ut aliud cœnobium construere possit, illam definitionem, quam nos inter fratres nostros tenemus, et ipsi inter se teneant excepto quòd inter se annuum capitulum non habebunt.

CAPUT III.

15. Sed omnes abbates de Ordine nostro singulis annis ad Cisterciense Capitulum Generale omni postpositâ occasione convenient, illis solis exceptis quos corporis infirmitas retinuerit, qui tamen idoneum nuntium delegare debebunt, per quem necessitas remorationis eorum valeat Capitulo nuntiari: et illis item exceptis qui in remoratioribus partibus habitantes, eo termino venient qui eis fuerit a Capitulo constitutus : quòd si quis aliâ quacumque de causâ quandoque remanere à nostro Generali Capitulo præsumpserit, in sequentis anni Capitulo pro culpâ veniam petat, nec sine gravi animadversione pertranseat.

16. In quo quidem Capitulo Generali de salute animarum suarum tractent, et in observatione sanctæ Regulæ et Ordinis si quid emendandum fuerit vel agendum, ordinent ; bonum pacis et charitatis inter se confirment.

17. Si quis verò abbas minus in Regula studiosus, vel rebus sæcularibus nimis intentus, vel in aliquibus vitiosus repertus fuerit, ibi charitativè clametur, clamatus veniam petat, et pœnitentiam sibi pro culpâ indictam adimpleat : hanc verò clamationem non nisi abbates faciant.

18. Si verò aliqua controversia inter aliquos abbates emerserit, vel de aliquo eorum tam gravis culpa propalata fuerit, ut suspensionem aut depositionem mereatur ; quidquid inde à Capitulo fuerit definitum, sine retractatione observetur.

19. Si fortè pro diversitate sententiarum in discordiam causa devenerit, illud inde irrefragabiliter teneatur quod Abbas Cistercii et hi qui sanioris consilii et magis idonei apparuerint, judicabunt : hoc observato, quòd nemo eorum ad quos specialiter causa respexerit, definitioni debeat interesse.

20. Si aliqua Ecclesia pauperiem intolerabilem incurrerit, abbas loci illius coram omni Capitulo hanc causam

intimare studeat ; et tunc singuli abbates maximo charitatis igne succensi, illius Ecclesiæ penuriam de rebus à Deo sibi collatis prout habuerint, sustentare festinent.

CAPUT IV.

21. Si qua domus Ordinis nostri abbate proprio fuerit destituta, major abbas de cujus domo illa exivit, omnem curam habeat ordinationis illius, donec abbas alius eligatur in eâ ; et præfixâ die electionis, etiam ex abbatibus si quos domus illa genuerit, advocentur et consilio et voluntate patris abbatis, abbates et monachi domûs illius eligant.

22. Domui autem Cistercii, quia Mater est omnium nostrûm, dum proprio Abbate caruerit, quatuor primi Abbates scilicet de Firmitate, de Pontigniaco, de Claravalle, et de Morimundo, provideant ; et super eos sit cura Domûs illius, donec Abbas in eâ electus fuerit et statutus.

23. Ad electionem autem Cisterciencis Abbatis, præfixâ et prænotatâ die ad minus per quindecim dies, convocentur ex abbatibus, quorum domus de Cistercii exierunt, et ex aliis quos prædicti abbates et fratres Cistercienses idoneas noverint : et congregati in nomine Domini Abbates et Monachi Cistercienses eligant Abbatem.

24. Liceat autem cuique Matri Ecclesia Ordinis nostri non solùm de monachis filiarum suarum Ecclesiarum, sed de ipsis quoque abbatibus earum, liberè sibi, si necesse fuerit, assumere abbatem : personam verò de alio Ordine, nulla de nostris Ecclesiis sibi elegat in abbatem, sicut nec nostrarum aliquem licet monasteriis aliis quæ non sint de Ordine nostro, dari.

CAPUT V.

25. Si quis abbas pro inutilitate seu pusillanimitate sua, a patre suo abbate domûs illius de quâ sua exivit,

postulaverit ut ab onere abbatiæ suæ relaxetur, caveat ille ne facilè et sine causâ rationabilè et multùm necessariâ acquiescat : sed etsi fuerit tanta necessitas, nihil per se inde faciat, sed convocatis aliquibus aliis abbatibus nostri Ordinis, eorum consilio agat quod pariter noverint oportere.

26. Si quis verò abbatum, contemptor sanctæ regulæ aut ordinis prævaricator, vel commissorum sibi fratrum vitiis consentiens innotuerit ; abbas majoris ecclesiæ per seipsum vel per priorem suum, aut quomodo opportuniùs potuerit, de emendatione eum admoneat usque quater : quòd si nec ita correctus fuerit, nec spontè cedere voluerit, congregato aliquanto numero abbatum nostræ congregationis, transgressorem sanctæ regulæ ab officio suo amoveant; ac deinceps alter qui dignus sit, consilio et voluntate majoris abbatis, à monachis illius ecclesiæ simul et ab abbatibus, si qui ad eam pertinent, sicut suprà dictum est, eligatur.

27. Si autem is qui deponitur et monachi ejus, quod Deus avertat, contumaces et rebelles esse voluerint, vel sententiis minimè acquiescant, ab ipso abbate majoris ecclesiæ et à cæteris coabbatibus ejus excommunicationi subdantur, ac deinceps ab eo coërceantur, prout fieri potuerit et cognoverint expedire.

28. Ex hoc sanè, si quis illorum ad se reversus de morte animæ suæ resurgere et ad matrem suam redere voluerit, tanquam filius pœnitens recipiatur: nam sine hac causâ multo semper studio devitandâ, nullus abbas monachum cujusque alterius abbatis ordinis nostri, sine ejus assensu retineat, nullus in domum alterius cujuscumque, sine ejus voluntate suos ad inhabitandum monachos introducat.

29. Eodem etiam modo, si fortè (quod sit) Abbates nostri Ordinis Matrem nostram Cisterciensem Ecclesiam in sancto proposito languescere, et ab observatione sanctæ Regulæ vel Ordinis exorbitare cognoverint ; Abbatem

ejusdem loci per quatuor primos Abbates, scilicet de Firmitate, de Pontigniaco, de Claravalle, et de Morimundo, sub cæterorum abbatum nomine, usque quater, ut corrigatur ipse et alios corrigere curet, admoneant, et cætera quæ de aliis dicta sunt abbatibus, si incorrigibiles apparuerint circa eum studiosè adimpleant; excepto quòd si sponte cedere noluerit, nec ipsum deponere, nec contumaci anathema dicere poterunt donec aut in Generali Capitulo, aut si illud fortè visum fuerit expectari non posse, in conventu alio convocatis abbatibus qui de Cistercii exierunt, et aliquibus aliorum, virum inutilem ab officio suo deponant, et tam ipsi quàm monachi Cistercienses contumaciter recalcitrare voluerint, gladio excommunicationis eos ferire minimè vereantur.

30. Postea autem, si quis horum prævaricatorum tandem resipiscens et animam suam salvare cupiens, ad quam libet quatuor nostrarum Ecclesiarum, sive ad Firmitatem, sive ad Pontigniacum, sive ad Claravallem, sive ad Morimundum confugerit, sicut domesticus et cohæres Ecclesiæ cum regulari satisfactione recipiatur, quoadusque propriæ Ecclesiæ, sicut justum fuerit, reconciliatus quandoque reddatur. Interim autem annuum abbatum capitilum non apud Cistercium, sed ubi à quatuor supranominatis Abbatibus provisum fuerit, celebretur.

THE CHART OF CHARITY,

OR THE PRIMORDIAL AND FUNDAMENTAL STATUTES OF THE ORDER OF CITEAUX.

CHAPTER I.

1. Because we are all servants—unprofitable indeed,—of one true King, Lord, and Master; therefore we demand no exaction of temporal profit or earthly goods, from the abbots and the brethren, whom the goodness of God has been pleased, through our unworthy instrumentality, to locate in divers places in the observance of regular discipline. For, desiring to be of service to them and to all the children of the Church, we will do nothing towards them that can be, either a source of affliction, or a subtraction of their temporal substance. We wish not to be made wealthy from their poverty; but to avoid as much as possible the vice of avarice, which the Apostle terms the "serving of idols."

2. It is, however, our intention, for the sake of charity, to watch with parental care over their souls; so that if they should at any time decline from their good resolution and the observance of their holy Rule,—which misfortune may God in his mercy avert,—we may be enabled by our constant solicitude, to bring them back to the path of rectitude and the duties of a religious life.

3. Now we wish and command them to observe the Rule of St. Benedict, in everything in which we observe it in our Monastery of Citeaux; and to understand it in

no other sense than that which our pious forefathers of Citeaux have given to it and maintained ; and which we ourselves now understand and hold after their example.

4. And because we receive all monks coming from other monasteries into ours, and they in like manner receive ours,—it seems proper to us, that all our monasteries should have the same usages in chanting, and the same books for the divine office and the celebration of the holy sacrifice of the Mass, as we have at Citeaux, that there may be no discord in our daily actions ; but that we may all live together in the bond of charity, under one Rule, and in the practice of the same observances.

5. Let no Monastery or person of our Order dare to ask for any privilege from any one, or if already obtained, to retain such privilege which is opposed to the established constitutions of the Order.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE POWER AND ON THE MANNER OF MAKING THE VISITATION OF MONASTERIES.

6. When the Abbot of Citeaux shall go to any other monastery, for the purpose of visitation, the Abbot of the monastery so visited, shall acknowledge the Abbey of Citeaux to be the mother-house, and shall yield precedency to its Abbot, in every part of his monastery; so that the Abbot of Citeaux shall hold the place of Abbot as long as he remains in that monastery.

7. And the Abbot of Citeaux shall not eat in the guest apartments, but in the refectory with the community, unless there should be no proper Abbot at that time in the monastery. The same Rule shall be observed, when several abbots make a similar visitation. If there be at the time no special Abbot of the monastery, then the one who is oldest in the abbatial dignity shall take his refresh-

ment in the guest apartments. The Abbot, however, in his own monastery, can always, even in the presence of an Abbot of superior dignity, profess his own novices at the termination of their regular noviceship.

8. Let the Abbot of Citeaux be careful not to touch any thing, to ordain any thing, or to dispose of any thing, with reference to the possessions of the monastery which he visits, without the consent of the Abbot and his brethren.

9. If he shall perceive that any of the precepts of the Rule, or the institutions of the Order, are violated in the monastery he is visiting, let him, with the advice and in presence of the Abbot, charitably endeavour to correct the brethren. But if the Abbot of the monastery be not present, the visitor shall, nevertheless, correct that which he finds amiss.

10. The Abbot of a mother-house shall visit annually, either in person or by one of his co-abbots, all the filiations of his own monastery. And if he should visit the brethren more frequently than this, let it be to them a subject of joy.

11. The four Abbots of La Fertè, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Morimond, shall visit in person, unless prevented by sickness, once in the year, and on the day which they shall appoint, the monastery of Citeaux, besides their attendance at the General Chapter.

12. When any Abbot shall visit our Abbey of Citeaux, due respect shall be paid him. If we be absent, he shall occupy our stall and eat in the guest apartments. The prior, in this case, disposes of the busines of the monastery. But the visitor shall not do these things in presence of the Abbot of Citeaux.

13. Let the following be the rule of abbeys that stand not in the relationship of filiations or mother-houses. Every abbot shall yield precedency to an abbot paying him a visit, that this admonition of Scripture may be

fulfilled, "in honour preventing one another." If two or more pay a visit at the same time, he who is the most ancient in the abbatial dignity shall hold the first place. All of them shall take their food in the refectory, as we have said above, except the abbot of the monastery, who dines with his guests. But when they meet together in council, they shall take precedency according to the antiquity of their abbeys; so that the abbot of the most ancient house shall occupy the first place. But they shall all mutually pay each other the deference of a profound inclination when they take their seats.

14. Whenever, by the mercy of God, any of our houses shall so increase as to be able to erect another foundation, let both the mother and the daughter follow the rule which we adopt among our brethren; with this exception, they shall not hold for themselves an annual chapter.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE PLACE, AND ON THE MANNER OF HOLDING THE GENERAL CHAPTER.

15. All the Abbots of our Order shall meet each year in General Chapter, without excuse, except grievous sickness; and then they shall depute proper representatives, or too great distance of locality, which shall be decided by the Chapter. If any Abbot, from any other cause, shall presume upon leave of absence from the General Chapter, he shall ask pardon for his fault the following year, and receive a severe reprimand.

16. In the General Chapter, the Abbots shall consult upon matters that appertain to the salvation of souls, and shall ordain what is to be corrected, or what carried out in the observance of the Rule, and the institutions of the Order. They shall likewise mutually confirm each other in the bond of peace and charity.

17. If any Abbot be less exact to the Rule than he ought, or be too much intent upon secular business, or be addicted to any vice, he shall be charitably proclaimed in the General Chapter; and when proclaimed, he shall ask pardon, and perform the penance imposed for his fault. No one but an Abbot shall make this proclamation.

18. If any controversy shall arise among the Abbots, or a fault so grievous shall be charged against any of them, that he thereby deserves suspension or deposition, whatever is decreed by the chapter in this matter shall be observed.

19. If through diversity of opinion there is engendered discord upon any subject, let that which the Abbot of Citeaux, with the more prudent and the more sagacious in council, shall decide with reference to the dispute be faithfully maintained. Neither of the interested parties shall be present during the decision.

20. If any monastery shall become extremely indigent, the Abbot shall give timely notice to the General Chapter; then all the Abbots assembled, animated by a lively charity, shall contribute to its relief, according to the means with which God may have blessed them.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE MANNER OF ELECTING ABBOTS.

21. If any monastery of our Order be without an Abbot, the Abbot of a house of superior dignity shall take the charge of it, until the election of a new Abbot. If it be a mother-house, the Abbots of the several filiations being assembled on the day appointed, shall proceed by the advice and desire of the presiding Abbot, to choose the new Abbot for the vacant dignity.

22. When Citeaux,—the mother-house of all the Monasteries of the Order,—is without an Abbot, the

Abbots of La Fertè, Pontigny, Clairvaux and Morimond, shall provide for the election of a new Abbot. And they shall have the charge of Citeaux until such Abbot has been duly elected and confirmed.

23. Fifteen days' notice shall be given previous to the election of the Abbot of Citeaux. Then all the Abbots, whose Monasteries are filiations of Citeaux, and such others, as the above-mentioned four Abbots of the greater houses and the brethren of Citeaux shall judge proper, being assembled in the name of the Lord, shall together with the brethren of Citeaux, elect the new Abbot.

24. It is lawful for any mother-house to choose an Abbot not only from the monks belonging to its filiations, but likewise from any of the Abbots of the said filiations, if this be deemed necessary. But no person of another Order shall ever be chosen Abbot for one of our houses; nor shall any of our members be permitted to become an Abbot in a Monastery of another Order.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE MANNER OF DEPOSING ABBOTS, AND OF RECEIVING THEIR ABDICATION AND DISMISSION.

25. If any Abbot in consideration either of his extreme helplessness or extreme timidity, shall ask permission from the superior of a mother-house to be released from the burden of his abbatial office, let not the superior easily and without a just and necessary cause give his consent. But if the reason alleged be judged sufficient, then let the superior not do any thing of himself; but having called together some abbots of the Order, let him proceed by their advice in that which ought to be done in this emergency.

26 If any Abbot shall despise the Rule and prevaricate against the Order, or shall knowingly connive at the

faults of his brethren, the Abbot of the mother-house, as soon as convenient, shall either by himself or his prior exhort the delinquent, even to the fourth time, to an amendment of conduct. But if he will neither correct his fault nor spontaneously abdicate, an assembly of Abbots—though not numerous—of our institute shall remove the transgressor of holy Rule from his office; and another worthy of the dignity shall be forthwith elected by the Abbot of the superior house, and by the Abbots of the filiations, if any belong to it, and by the brethren of the monastery, in the manner above described.

27. When an Abbot is deposed, if his religious become contumacious and rebellious (which may God forbid), or will not acquiesce in the sentence which has been pronounced upon him, let them be excommunicated by the Abbot of the mother-house and his co-abbots; and afterwards punished as it shall be judged expedient.

28 But if any of these disobedient members shall be sorry for his offence, and wish to return to his Father's house, let him be received as a repentant son. Except in this case, no Abbot of our Order shall retain the subject of another Abbot without his consent. In like manner no one shall introduce members of his own community into the monastery of another without permission.

29. If it should happen—which may Heaven forefend!—that the Abbot of Citeaux becomes cold in the practice of his duties, and departs from the observance of holy Rule and the constitutions, the four Abbots of La Fertè, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Morimond, shall, in the name of all the other Abbots, admonish him to the fourth time that he may correct himself and others. But if he prove incorrigible, then they must diligently carry out the instructions which we have given concerning the deposition of Abbots, with this proviso: if he does not abdicate of his own accord, they can neither depose him, nor pronounce against him anathema, unless in General

Chapter. But if it would be too long to wait for the annual meeting, they must proceed with their censures in an assembly of Abbots who have been elected from Citeaux, with others summoned for the occasion. And when this unworthy superior has been deposed, they together with the Brethren of Citeaux shall choose a person with suitable qualifications to fill the vacancy. But if both the Abbot and the Brethren of Citeaux conjointly prove contumacious, let them be solemnly excommunicated.

30. If later any of these prevaricators, repenting of his fault and desirous of saving his soul, shall seek refuge in one of these four houses, La Fertè, Pontigny, Clairvaux and Morimond, let him be received, after due satisfaction, as one of the members of the house, until he shall be reconciled and return to his own monastery, if this shall be judged proper. During the settlement of this unpleasantness; the General Chapter shall not be held at Citeaux, but at one of the four Abbeys abovementioned.

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